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# The ANTIOCH REVIEW

Volume Four · · Summer 1944 · · Number Two

. . . *Featuring* . . .

## *FARMERS in their New World*

Articles by

David Lewis
Murray D. Lincoln
Lewis Corey
Russell Smith
Marion Clawson
P. A. Waring *and* W. M. Teller

DEAR SAM, *a story* . . by Irwin Stark

—Other articles by JOHN DEWEY, GEORGE R. GEIGER, FREEMAN CHAMPNEY, BEATRICE GOMBERG, WILL LISSNER.

PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR AT YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO
SUBSCRIPTION THREE DOLLARS A YEAR — SINGLE COPIES SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

# *A REPORT TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS*

*The Antioch Review* has come a long way in the last three years. Maybe it's time that we issued an annual (or triennial) report — like a public corporation. Or maybe we ought to throw around a few statistics. Space and paper being what they are these days, however, here is just a handful of the highlights:

In three years *The Antioch Review* has more than doubled its subscription list, which now includes more than 200 college and university and public libraries. The magazine has been indexed from its first issue in the *International Index to Periodicals*. . . .

The *Review's* articles are frequently quoted or referred to elsewhere. Paragraphs from six of them have been used in volumes of the *Reference Shelf* series published by the H. W. Wilson Company and widely used in public libraries. The Carnegie Endowment for Peace reprinted and distributed 10,000 copies of Mordecai Ezekiel's "Lines of Action in Economic Reconstruction." Charles Madison's "Margaret Fuller: Transcendental Rebel" is to be translated into Spanish and Portuguese and reprinted in several South American magazines. Our only fiction previous to this issue, the short story "Homecoming" by Jessie Treichler, was selected for the *Best American Short Stories for 1943*. . . .

Most successful was our Labor Issue (Fall, 1943). We sold more than 2400 copies. An interesting sidelight was the purchase of 40 copies by the O.W.I. for use in an adult education project in the state of Maryland. The issue, believe it or not, won us 206 new subscriptions from men in the armed forces. . . .

Those are a few of the items which would go into our annual report — if we had one.

THE EDITORS

*The* ANTIOCH REVIEW

Yellow Springs, Ohio

$3 ONE YEAR $5 TWO YEARS

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# *The* ANTIOCH REVIEW

VOLUME IV — Published in June, 1944 — NUMBER 2



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# *The* ANTIOCH REVIEW

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.


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Published at Yellow Springs, Ohio, in March, June, September, and December by THE ANTIOCH REVIEW, Incorporated, a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio. THE ANTIOCH REVIEW is not an official publication of Antioch College and the views expressed in its columns are not necessarily those of the College. Subscription rates: $3.00 the year; Canadian, $3.50; Foreign, $4.00. Single copies, seventy-five cents.

Contributions should be sent to The Editors of THE ANTIOCH REVIEW, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Unsolicited manuscripts which are found unavailable for publication will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Editors assume no responsibility for the views expressed by contributors of articles.

Publication Office, 212 Xenia Avenue, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Entered as second-class matter March 22, 1941 at the post office at Yellow Springs, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

*The* ANTIOCH REVIEW

Volume Four ·.· Summer 1944 ·.· Number 2

# *EDITORIAL*

WE ARE now in the most critical three-to-six-month period of the war. The military aspects of this fact are plain. For two years the invasion of Europe has been discussed, demanded, and prepared for. In the end we have come to know something of the size of that military undertaking and to guess at something of its hazards. Now, many of us have sons and brothers in the struggle from whom we have not heard since the Normandy beachheads were first stormed. And in the meantime we have seen numerous pictures and have heard and read countless words bringing home to us the bloody but to date triumphant details. More than before in this war, our emotions and our senses are fixed upon the fortunes of war in the field. This, we say, thinking of the fighting in France, is *it*—and we know well enough the meaning of possible military defeat or stalemate there.

Not so well understood is the critical importance of the home front. More than three thousand miles separate the home front from the battle front. But none of that distance seems to be telescoped when it is enclosed within the parallel columns of the same newspaper or the words of the same radio newscast. On D-day we learned not only that American soldiers were risking their lives across the English Channel but that 2,500,000 gallons of gasoline which might have gone to help them had passed instead into the Black Market. In the first twelve days of the invasion more than 3,000 of our boys were killed and over 12,000 were wounded . . . and in the same time business on the Stock Exchange began to hit "2-million share days," with "peace" stocks steadily rising. The same edition which told of American boys slugging away at Quinville, hand to hand, "Indian style, and hedge to hedge," told also the sorry tale of Congressional failure to hold the line on price control.

On D-day we prayed and there was no professional baseball and only a few race tracks were open. A little better than that, we have crowded the bloodbanks and bought more war bonds. Yet the body politic is still a split personality.

To date we have suffered on the home front not so much from war weariness as from war uncertainty and war ignorance. Neither our homes nor our factories have been bombed. Incredibly we have produced on full stomachs, never before so well fed, and we have been deprived of only a few minor "necessities" and of no more than half our usual "luxuries." We tell ourselves that this is a "war of production" and that our "industrial army" is quite as important as the strictly military, yet to the doubting Thomases there is no physical proof. No one dies on the production line, no one starves on the home front or is wounded; instead, many of us are better off than we have ever been in our lives.

The story of our production has not been told often enough; that its strategy is as important for invasion as military strategy has never been dramatized. And the fact that we do not understand that importance makes the situation the more critical.

It has been the experience of both Britain and Russia that serious bottlenecks in production develop *after* a major engagement is under way rather than during its preparation. We manufacture now more than half a million items for use by our fighting men in the battle line. Some of the more important of these items go into action at the front within two or three weeks from the time they come off the assembly line. Those two or three weeks, the fact that tanks and planes and other weapons will be ready in France when they are needed, can mean the difference between life and death for thousands of boys from the fields of Iowa, Ohio, Georgia, or from the pavements of New York. A slight shift in strategy or a change in tactics may mean a complete changeover in production within certain plants. If our attack is not to falter, we must have fully as much mobility at home as abroad.

This critical time in war production comes at a moment when stockpiles of a few military materials and items are sufficient, when cutbacks are occuring here and there, when some industrial concerns are preparing to convert to civilian goods, when some war workers, convinced that the market for war goods is letting up, have an eye on more permanent jobs in "peacetime" industry.

We cannot prevent conversion. Indeed, much of our wartime security from here on out will depend paradoxically upon the orderliness of our gradual conversion to peace. It is a serious complication, but in the general interest, there must be no sharp differentiation between war and peacetime production. Labor and industry continuing or increasing war production or taking up new war jobs must not feel that it is being penalized. There must be safeguards. The rules for conversion should be promptly and fairly laid down. If business concerns are to be promptly paid off by the government and if they are to earn a rebate on their taxes for expenditures in postwar civilian production, then too the worker who continues in war work should receive a bonus or severance pay for his faithfulness and for his protection.

We have chosen to handle manpower without a labor draft. Though difficult, this is the right course. Only those accustomed to leading labor could safely wield the sledgehammer of a "draft," and to date, contrary to the English experience, we have been unwilling to trust even the best of labor leaders with any comparable or preparatory responsibility in the government. As to our success with legal and specific controls from outside the labor movement, the chief results are now embalmed in the hate-ridden Smith-Connally Act. The voluntary way is difficult but with use it can become powerful too, as experience with the July 1 ruling of the War Manpower Commission should prove.

We must understand these things—the critical importance of the home front; the need for mobility in a vital part of our industrial army; the requirement of a protective and orderly conversion. They would be more easily comprehended, however, if they were fused together by an improved program of political education. For more than eighteen months we have had no statements from our leaders on war aims. Indeed, the effort to fight the war in a political vacuum has reached the last extremity of the ridiculous. (*Vide* the banning by the Army and Navy of Charles Beard's *The Republic,* E. B. White's *One Man's Meat,* and other books on the ground that they will influence the coming or some other election!) Since Congress gave the domestic branch of O.W.I. the *coup de grâce,* there has been no one whose business it was to help the home front discover why it is fighting except the President, and he has been occupied with other, more military and more international plans. But the time for his participation is now overdue. Morale on the home front demands it.

# FARMER-LABOR UNITY: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE C.C.F.

*By* DAVID LEWIS

IN COUNTRIES where agriculture and the size of the farming population are as important as in Canada and the United States, the future of democratic progress may well depend on the achievemnt of political unity between the farmers and industrial workers. In fact, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada goes further and insists that that unity must be extended to include the urban middle class as well. A people's political movement, independent of old, capitalist parties and based on a realistic program of democratic socialism is the aim of the C.C.F. In large measure this objective is being realized and the experience of this Canadian party in the field of farmer-labor cooperation may be of value elsewhere.

I suggest that one of the factors which contributed to the prewar defeat of European labor and socialist movements was their failure to bridge the gap between the industrial working class and the farmers. A visit to Austria in the early '30's, for example, presented this problem in striking and discouraging fashion. The cities and industrial towns carried everywhere the mark of socialist influence. The socialist party reached into every activity—cultural as well as economic—and did so in a creative and dynamic way. But no sooner did one pass the boundaries of the town than that influence disappeared. Among the farmers, poor and rich, the socialist idea was almost wholly a cause for fear, and therefore for blind opposition. The division was stark and final. And because the farmers feared and hated socialism, without the slightest knowledge of its theories and objectives, they naturally became an easy prey for the demagogues whose main point of attack was "foreign" socialism and the domination by city over country.

The same or a similar story would be accurate for most European countries including, with some modifications, the labor movement of Great Britain, and excepting only the Scandinavian countries. It is not suggested that this was the main reason for socialist failure in Europe,

still less that it was the only reason. But it is nevertheless clear that had the socialist and labor movements struck roots among the farmers, the march of the counter-revolutionaries would have been much more difficult.

In discussing this problem it is more usual for socialists to blame the farmer for his conservatism and for his failure to see the light. I shall argue that the fault has in the past lain mainly with the socialist for failing to see the farmer. I believe that the success which the C.C.F. has had so far is in large measure due to the simple fact that the farmer has from the start been as much a part of it as the worker.

European socialist history shows, I think, that the labor and socialist movements there were for a long time little concerned about the farmer.

The Marxian emphasis on the role of the industrial working class was carried to an unwarranted and dangerous extreme. Little attempt was made to understand the farmer's problems and even less to speak his language. On the contrary, there was implicit in most socialist literature a kind of contempt for the farmer as a benighted tool of the capitalist class. At few points in socialist literature or activity could the farmer feel himself at home. At best he was asked to attach himself to something which basically belonged to someone else; at worst he was simply ignored. That so indifferent a courtship was indignantly rejected is not to be wondered at.

The C.C.F. in Canada has sought to learn the important lesson from the European experience. As we shall see, there are historical and social reasons why this Canadian movement has to a considerable extent succeeded in welding the workers and farmers into one political party. Further, the task is by no means complete yet. Divisions between city and country still exist to an undesirable extent and the antisocialist opposition is doing all it can to widen the gulf. But at the moment we are concerned with emphasizing that the C.C.F. attitude toward the farmer is the precise opposite of the socialist attitude in Europe. At every step the farmer is given as prominent a place in the party's literature, program, and deliberations as the industrial worker. The whole psychological environment in the party is one in which he feels himself at home. The unity of interest and objective between farmer and worker is not only stressed in speeches and official declarations; it is woven into the fabric of the party's daily life.

On the concrete organizational plane the same attitude prevails. Wherever there are organizers in the field, they give as much thought and attention to recruiting farm folk into the ranks of the C.C.F. as city workers. More than that. So far as finances and personnel make possible, farmers or people who know farm problems are appointed to handle rural organization. Thus the democratic and social objectives of the C.C.F. are presented to Canada's farmers in their own language and in terms of their own needs. The classic socialist emphasis on the "day-to-day struggle" is applied not only with regard to the problems of unions and unorganized industrial workers; it is applied with equal care to the needs of farmers, farm cooperatives and farm communities.

I give first place to this "subjective" reason for the C.C.F. success in bringing farmer and worker into one political movement, not because it belongs historically in this position, but because I believe it to be of great significance to the political science of socialism. I suggest that no movement will succeed in achieving the objective of farmer-labor unity which starts out with a psychology of contempt for the farmer; which works on the assumption, nurtured by capitalist spokesmen, that every farmer is a "capitalist" who is a potential enemy. Along this path lies failure. Furthermore, I believe it is basically wrong in fact with respect to those farm families who work their farms themselves. It is right only for those so-called farmers who make their fortunes out of the "surplus value" produced by an agricultural proletariat whose labor power they exploit.

There is no doubt that many farmers have what is called a capitalist psychology. I wonder, however, whether it is stronger than that of the relatively sheltered and highly-paid industrial worker. Experience would suggest that it is not, that the working farmer is perhaps less subject to the blandishments of so-called "free enterprise" than, say, the highly-paid railway worker who has acquired a home of his own and a few scattered shares of stock. Just as socialist activity has given a great deal of attention to disabusing the latter's mind of its misconceptions and fears, so it must direct similar attention to the farmer. And there is no historical or logical reason to conclude that the task will be any more difficult, if approached in a scientific and sympathetic way.

Perhaps the most important single factor which enabled the C.C.F. to weld farmers and workers into a united political movement was the manner and circumstances in which the party was formed. In a previous

article in *The Antioch Review,* dealing with the rise and growth of the C.C.F., I indicated that it was the farmer organizations of the Prairie Provinces which really took the initiative in founding the party in 1932. They participated fully in the formulation of the party's program outlined in its basic document, known as the "Regina Manifesto." They won their point to exclude farms from the socialization sector (in which, I shall argue later, they were right), but they accepted the basic socialist objectives of the C.C.F.

It is an important and desirable fact of democratic behavior that consent can be won most readily through active participation in the formulation of the policy for which consent is sought. This was achieved at the very inception of the C.C.F. Further, the presence of a large number of farmer representatives at the founding of the party meant that its program, its policy, and its organization would from the start mirror the problems and aims of agriculture as well as those of the town folk. It was not the case of a city party going out to win the farmer or of a rural party seeking to win the worker. They were both there together from the start.

Clearly the conjunction of circumstances may not always and everywhere be present for such an ideal start for a new political party. But it is always possible to pursue a conscious policy aimed at bringing the farmer into the leadership and direction of the party, so that he becomes an integral part of it and directly influences its day-to-day thinking and action.

An important factor in the whole problem of farmer political action is the nature of the agricultural industry and the economic position of the farming class. Here again Canada presented the C.C.F. with a relatively happy condition. Canadian agriculture has almost no "capitalist" farmers and relatively few agricultural laborers. The vast majority of Canada's farms are worked by the farm families themselves. Before analyzing this a little farther by means of a few statistical data, it is necessary to emphasize that this does not mean that farm operators all own their farms clear of debt. On the contrary, a substantial proportion of Canadian farms are heavily mortgaged and the number of farm tenants has increased. However, this is a different problem and requires action to rid the farmer of his indebtedness and to turn tenant-farmers into owner-farmers. What we are concerned with here is the fact that Canadian

agriculture has not yet produced a class of farm-factories such as are to be found in parts of the United States.

*Size of Farms in Canada*

(Based on the 1941 Census Bulletin No. 48 of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total Number of Farms | 732,715 | 100% |
| 1- 50 acres | 110,441 | 15.1 |
| 51-100 " | 159,100 | 21.7 |
| 101-200 " | 230,203 | 31.4 |
| 201-299 " | 37,721 | 5.1 |
| 300-479 " | 103,151 | 14.1 |
| 480-639 " | 39,196 | 5.4 |
| 640 acres and over | 52,903 | 7.2 |

From the above table it will be seen that more than one-third of Canada's farms are less than one hundred acres in size, that almost three-quarters of the farms are less than three hundred acres and that only seven per cent are larger than 640 acres or one section. In fact, even the relatively large farms do not necessarily have significance from our point of view. For almost all of them are wheat farms which must be fairly large to be economical at all. Thus of all the farms in the 300-to-479 acre range, over eighty-one per cent are in the Prairie Provinces; of those in the 480-to-639-acre range, almost ninety-two per cent and of those over 640 acres, ninety-five per cent are on the prairies. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that in the case of mixed and fruit farming a much smaller farm may yield a relatively large return.

*Number of Farm Workers in Canada*

(Based on the 1941 Census Bulletin No. 31 of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Number of all workers (including operators and their families) | 1,246,662 | 100% |
| Members of operator's family | 993,324 | 79.7 |
| Hired the year round | 48,781 | 3.9 |
| Hired by the month | 89,235 | 7.2 |
| Hired by the day | 115,282 | 9.2 |

This table emphasizes the same condition. Eighty per cent of all those working on the farms in Canada consist of the operators themselves and their families. Only four per cent are year-round farm workers, the rest of the agricultural laborers are transient and seasonal workers. In fact, the trend of the number of farm laborers has been downward due, no doubt, to the mechanization of agriculture.

In short, Canada's farmers are almost entirely dirt farmers who get out of the land what they put into it by their own and their families' labor. With the exception of the mortgage companies and similar corporations which have acquired farms through foreclosure, and some fruit processing concerns, there are almost no large agricultural landowners in Canada. Obviously this situation is the economic factor which makes possible in Canada the C.C.F. policy of private ownership of farms, a more uniform approach to all sections of the farm population and greater success in bringing farmer and worker together. We have not here those farm forces, like the Farm Bureau of the United States, which represent the large owning class and are passionately interested in maintaining a system of privilege.

The result has been that almost every farm organization in Canada has always been basically progressive. Their own demands have usually been desirable not only for the group they represent but also for the community as a whole. They have seldom shown any organized animosity toward labor and have often evidenced sympathy and moral support for its aspirations. In fact, in the field of citizenship education and cooperative community endeavor, Canada's farm organizations have shown and still show a much greater interest and activity than the labor unions. I think it is historically true to say that in Canada the farmers have, on the whole, been a progressive force socially and politically. This in major part explains how the western farmers played such an important role in the formation of the C.C.F.

Again it is clear that not all countries have similar conditions in their agricultural economy. Thus in Britain the large, semi-feudal estate is still predominant and in the United States there is a class of capitalist farmer who is aligned, in and out of Congress, with the most unyielding forces of reaction. But in almost every country a majority of the farming population consists of dirt farmers. These can, I believe, be harnessed to progressive and even socialist political action by a correct program and a suitable organizational approach.

A consideration of the program of a democratic socialist movement in its relation to agriculture brings us to the question of the correct policy regarding the ownership of farms. On this subject the average farmer feels very strongly. He is determined to own his farm, if he can, and to have the right to hand it on to his family after he passes away. Nationali-

zation of farm land he does not want, except in the case where it is owned by large nonoperating landowners.

Canadian farmers hold this position as strongly as those in other countries. In my opinion and in that of the C.C.F., their view is a proper and justifiable one. The C.C.F. is convinced, first, that the farmer's desire to own his farm is a good and not a bad thing and, second, that there is neither logical nor practical contradiction between private ownership of farms by working farmers and the socialization of other industry.

There is no space in this article for an exhaustive treatment of this important subject. I can only sketch briefly the reasoning and attitude of the C.C.F. There can be little doubt that the farmer's relation to his land is very different from that of the worker to the corporation which he serves or the machine which he tends. The good farmer has a feeling of personal relationship toward his land, and farming, even mechanized farming, remains a highly personal and creative occupation. The farmer's wish to own his land, and to be able to hand it over to his son after he passes, is therefore not necessarily an antisocial aim. On the contrary, it contains within it elements of great social good. For it seems to me clear that if it is possible to build a collective society and retain within it the personal relationship between the farmer and his land, one has a better society than otherwise.

Socialization of industry is an urgent necessity (Earl Browder notwithstanding) politically to break the power of the capitalist class and hand it over to the people, and economically to enable the application of social planning and social objectives to the production and distribution of goods and services. There is nothing inherently sacred about socialization; its achievement is a historical imperative in the twentieth century because it alone can produce the new relationships in society which economic development has made possible and necessary for human advance.

This elementary statement of the objectives of socialization should be kept in mind in order to place the position of farming in its correct perspective. There is a class of capitalist farmers in countries like the United States whose economic and political power must be broken in the same way and for the same purpose as that of the financial and industrial monopolists. The majority of farmers, and almost all of the Canadian farmers, however, are not in this class. Their relative power position in society is the same as that of the industrial workers; their personal aims

and objectives are the same as those of city folk; they are among the exploited under capitalism and not among the exploiters; they have the same conflicts with monopoly capitalism as the rest of the community. There is therefore no reason whatever for land socialization in terms of the struggle for power.

The question remains whether economic efficiency and planning require socialized farming in order to insure that agricultural production proceeds in accordance with national and international needs. The answer is, so far as I can see, again in the negative. Canadian farmers have shown themselves ready to apply scientific methods to production if they are given the necessary assistance and information. Their performance in this war has been remarkable and reassuring. As in every other branch of our industry, the Canadian government was obliged to introduce some measure of planning in agriculture for war purposes. I do not know of any instance when the farmers failed to meet the schedule set by government agencies, if it was physically possible to do so and if the price was adequate. Nor is there any a priori reason to assume that there is some special difficulty about planning and streamlining agricultural production if farms remain family-owned.

Family ownership of farms, however, does not entail anarchy. To maximize and modernize production, family ownership should be buttressed by socialization of farm implement, packing and processing industries; by control of exports and the planning of home markets; and by the voluntary cooperative operation of adjacent farms where individual farms are too small to utilize mechanized methods economically. To complete the picture it is necessary to add that the C.C.F. believes that cooperative ownership is a desirable and feasible form of social ownership, and that it might be beneficially applied to industries which serve the farmer.

As I have said, this is not an attempt to deal satisfactorily with the basic problem of the organization of agriculture in a socialist economy. To do so would require much deeper analysis of both economic and political factors. It would require a scientific differentiation between classes of farmers in countries like the United States, and a consideration of the position of the important experiences and successes of the Soviet Union and their application to the Western democracies. Thus I am fully

conscious that my sketchy comments have only pointed the problem and probably raise more questions than they have answered.

However, I have, I think, said enough to indicate the lines along which C.C.F. agricultural policy proceeds. It is definitely based on the family ownership of farms, coupled with the other measures outlined in the previous paragraphs. In fact, one of the major day-to-day struggles of the farmer is to regain ownership of his land, buildings, and equipment, which are often heavily mortgaged. Another major issue is a guarantee of markets and adequate prices for agricultural products, so that the farmer may avoid falling into the hands of mortgage companies in the future. Thus instead of the farmer worrying whether his farm will be taken from him under socialism, the C.C.F. tells him that in its program lies his only hope of security in his ownership.

In practice it has been found that if a farmer can be persuaded that this really is the policy and intention of the C.C.F. and if he can be made to understand the simple logic of the policy, his support of the party and its program follows almost inevitably. But the opponents of socialism and of the C.C.F. concentrate most of their attention on this issue and persistently threaten farmers with loss of their farms should the C.C.F. come to power. There is no more foundation for this than for their fear-campaign that the urban people will be deprived of their homes, savings, and insurance policies, or than there is for American reactionaries to try to frighten the people of the United States about the "socialist" and "communist" intentions of Mr. Roosevelt. But reaction at bay does not worry about facts and scruples; those are for professors and idealists. As the C.C.F. in Canada grows in power and promise, the fight against it naturally gains in strength and viciousness. And one of the most insistent canards employed by Canadian reaction is the threat that the C.C.F. will take away the farmer's land. Thus the major practical difficulty which the C.C.F. has to overcome among farmers is to convince them that its enemies are deliberately lying about its farm policy and that it really means exactly what it says. In this it is meeting with growing success, as the reasoning behind the policy is more widely understood as honest basic theory and not merely a tactic to win farmer support.

The importance of this question to the problem of unity between town and country is obvious. The C.C.F. farm policy is another evidence of its conscious concern to adapt its program to serve the needs of the

farmer as well as those of the city worker. The policy removes one of the major fears of the farmer regarding socialism and prepares the way for wider collaboration between him and his fellow-Canadian in the town. His mind becomes ready to receive and to understand the real objectives of the industrial working class and to perceive that they are the same as his own.

It would be foolish and dangerous to ignore the fact that there are real divisions between town and country. There are those which stem from the wide differences in habits of living and of thinking. It is hard for the worker not to assume an attitude of worldly superiority and for the farmer to appreciate the need for a much larger cash income if one lives in the city. In the short-range period the worker's immediate interest sometimes appears to require a lower price to the farmer and the latter's position seems to conflict with higher wages for the worker. In the earlier days of capitalism, agricultural interest appeared to need free world trade, while the urban proletariat desired a protected home industry. Finally, the strong bargaining position of organized labor, and the historically dynamic role of the industrial working class, make the farmer somewhat fearful and suspicious. These and others are real differences and they present real problems.

Having said all this, however, there remains no doubt that the differences are as shadows compared with the substance of the community of interests between farmer and worker. Neither the worker nor the farmer can dispose of the goods which he produces unless the other has sufficient purchasing power to consume it. No part of the economy can function successfully while other parts are going down and no section of the people can continue prosperous while other sections are suffering poverty. Depression hits both agriculture and industry. In fact, judging from the experience of the '30's, the agricultural industry, particularly that part of it which depends on the export market, may be hit the hardest.

Moreover, workers and farmers struggle continuously against the same monopolistic forces in our modern society. Their grievances stem from the same source, their protests are directed against the same evils. The conflicts between them are the result of the contradictions of capitalism and disappear with greater understanding. The bonds between them are as real as the interdependence of every section of the economy is a fact. Rationally, then, there is every reason why workers and farmers

should take joint political action and almost no reason why they should oppose one another. The gulf between them is a psychological one, in part deliberately dug by the forces of reaction for the purpose of dividing the people and in part the result of ignorance and prejudice.

The solution lies in translating the community of interest between farmer and worker into effective political strategy. I have tried to argue, both from general principles and from the Canadian experience, that a proper policy and organizational approach can unite farmer and worker into a people's political movement. I have also urged that to achieve this end certain habits of thought and action in the ranks of socialists must be changed.

All this is not to say that the C.C.F. has not made mistakes. Even those of us who have been responsible for the errors can now see some of them; other people could no doubt point out more. Nor am I suggesting that all obstacles in the way of worker-farmer unity have been cleared away in Canada. On the contrary, there are still many difficulties to overcome. There are still rural communities which remain antagonistic to the C.C.F., conservative in outlook and suspicious of the industrial worker. Prejudice dies hard, especially when there are powerful interests working ceaselessly to keep it alive. The C.C.F. still has a long, hard road to travel. I do, however, believe that it is learning what that road must be and that its experience may perhaps serve as a useful guide elsewhere.[1]

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[1]Editor's Note: On June 15th there was a general election in the Province of Saskatchewan. This prairie province is almost entirely agricultural; it has very little industry and few industrial workers. Yet the C.C.F. won a decisive victory, taking 46 of 51 contested seats in the legislature; with one district election still to come, and with three additional legislators to be elected by Saskatchewan voters in uniform, the chances are good that the C.C.F. will have 50 representatives in a total House of 55. C.C.F. members elected are a very interesting cross-section—29 working farmers, 8 trade-unionists, and the rest from the middle class. The election of this first democratic socialist government on the North-American continent gives further point to Mr. Lewis' thesis.

# AGRICULTURE IN AMERICA'S CRISIS

*By* MURRAY D. LINCOLN

THIS COUNTRY is currently engaged in winning two wars and preparing for its consequent peace responsibilities. Toward this end there is determined commitment by all segments of our population. But beneath our veneer of national war unity still another battle rages. It is a battle of the ideas which seek to chart the postwar course of our national economy. On this battle front there is much confusion, fear, and ignorance. It is a battle with ominous implications. It is a battle which, if lost, may find us as fascist as the very forces we seek to destroy.

Agriculture is not above or beyond this conflict. It is, in fact, very much a part of it, and there are signs that agriculture, unaware of the real issues involved, may not make the right choice when the time comes. I wish, therefore, to discuss first the current conflict of ideologies taking place here in America. I think no consideration of our agrarian future can logically overlook an understanding of the crisis we are facing. Further, I wish to consider two dangers which agriculture faces in assuming its responsible role in shaping a better America: (1) its antagonism to other segments of our economy; and (2) its growing negative attitude toward government. And finally, I wish to discuss farm cooperatives as part of the progressive movement in America.

## I

We Americans tend to have a naive faith that whatever happens to the rest of the world, America will come out all right. We imagine an immunity to the ills which pervade other modern industrial societies. We say, "It can't happen here." Unfortunately this is not the case. We must either understand this current crisis and meet it courageously or allow our sophisms to betray us.

America has all the requisites for an abundant economy. War emergency has revealed an astonishing production capacity. We have eliminated our "irreducible nine million unemployed." We have abundant

resources, natural and technological. We need only the vision and moral fiber to bring these elements together in the interest of common welfare. This means that we turn our attention to group goals. This means we view our economy as a whole, and that capital, labor, and agriculture share justly in the abundance we are capable of producing. And finally, this means planning—democracy planning its way toward a more stable and abundant economy.

We have, then, on one side of this struggle, those who seek an end to the scarcity economy of the past. There is no natural law which holds we must have cyclical depressions and insecurity. There is no moral law which holds that those with economic power shall determine the security or insecurity of millions of workers on the basis of profit alone. Italy and Germany have shown us what happens when democracy grows sluggish. The war has shown us what can happen when democracy "gets fire in its belly." Total democratic planning brings us close to "D" day with every conviction of victory. Total democratic planning after the war can bring the abundant economy we are prepared to experience.

Unfortunately the forces of reaction today are both strong and articulate. They represent the tremendous corporate structure of American industry. They wave the flag of "American Tradition" and wax eloquent about so-called "free enterprise." They fear democratic planning because it might require them to operate in the public interest. They want no part of government regulation or control. They wail about restrictions and contract renegotiations when their annual take, after taxes, is already well above the peak 1929 level. With an eye on America's well filled pocketbook they want to take one more good crack at it.

We cannot afford to be sentimental about our great American business institutions. For fifty years they have been combining through every device in and outside the law. Berle and Means, American economists, have pointed out that at the rate of 1909-1929 centralization, 200 corporations would own fifty per cent of the wealth of the nation by 1950. There is no sign of reversals in this trend. An advertisement in a recent issue of *Nation's Business* read as follows: "Going Businesses wanted by Leading Manufacturer. Manufacturer with extensive engineering, manufacturing and sales facilities is desirous of buying going businesses, regardless of size, with good peace-time products." This phenomenon in business is certain to continue.

One could not object to the concentration of such wealth and power in the hands of a few if it operated in the best interest of the millions who look to it for security. But such is not the case. What they call "free enterprise" has been freedom to limit production in the interest of the highest possible profits. To this end they have employed the practices of monopoly, cartel agreements, division of territories, price-fixing formulas, communities of interest, and stabilization accords. Our antitrust laws have been unable to stem this tide. William Carelton, political scientist of the University of Florida, puts the matter this way:

> For too long we have needlessly lived in an economy of scarcity. We have the machines, the technical equipment and the productive capacity to eliminate poverty in this country. But we have allowed the giant monopolies to curtail production, to hold prices rigid and high, and to stifle new inventions. What an indignant howl went up in certain quarters when we killed the squealing pigs and plowed up the cotton. Well, we would not have needed to slaughter those pigs and plow up that cotton if our big manufacturers had not deliberately prevented the birth of shoes, textiles, plows, harvesters, radios, iceboxes and bathtubs. With enormous unused capacity, our manufacturers curtailed production to keep up prices. No wonder the farmers demanded some approach to parity prices through a comparable policy of agricultural curtailment.

This conflict, currently raging here in America, brings with it the grave responsibility of decision. Robert Lynd bluntly resolves the struggle into two alternatives when he says, "We do have a momentous political choice as to whether (1) private industry will take over and run the state under a fascist-type of set-up, or (2) the democratic state will take over and socialize the economy. And there is no possibility, beyond perhaps the next decade, of straddling the two systems." In similar vein, Professor Carelton remarks, "The alternatives, then, in this country are not regulation or free enterprise. The alternatives are regulation or more monopoly. And make no mistake about it, more monopoly will lead us ultimately to fascism and after that socialism. If we are wise we shall after this war travel far along the road to government regulation."

If, then, these are the alternatives, where do the American people stand? Unfortunately, as in the past, the American people sit on the fence ready to play follow the leader to the side which can most successfully capture its imagination. There is general apathy, disinterest, and ignorance of the real dangers involved. It is inconceivable that there should be no national discussion on these issues. We are fiddling while Rome burns. I know of only one group—the American cooperatives—who is

aware and informed on these critical problems. But cooperatives, generally considered as Holy Rollers in the economic kingdom, wield only small influence on the total national scene. At a time when the common man has the most to lose he is nowhere to be seen or heard.

Not so with big business. For them the chips are down and they are waging a hand-to-hand battle for public support. With most of the agencies of mass impression at their disposal they are sniping at government and calling for a return to the "good old days." On the radio one hears half-minute blurbs sandwiched into symphonies, extolling the virtues of free enterprise. Business clubs from coast to coast sing the blues of government regulation. They ply their listeners with catchwords and phrases—"freedom," "American tradition," and "initiative." And they're convincing a lot of people.

America, then, is in the throes of conflict between nineteenth century ideas and twentieth century problems. The challenge to preserve democracy involves a recognition by all groups that we are a whole national community. It is our responsibility to see that all elements of our economy are brought into focus with the common good. And if our social and political thinkers are correct, we must either democratically plan our way into an economy of security and abundance, or goose-step into the very type of society we reject by war.

This conflict and confusion finds American agriculture generally unprepared. Farmers are concerned with products and not ideas. Failure to understand the expediency of government directives is making many farmers easy prey for those who seek an end to government planning. American farming is sectional and varied. Agricultural organizations represent sectional and class interests. There is little or no general consensus on positive agriculture polices beyond, perhaps, an ambiguous demand for "fair prices."

This situation is a challenge to every agricultural leader in the nation. Agriculture not only has a stake in the current crisis, it has a responsibility. It represents one of the two broadly organized national groups. It can either default its responsibility in this period of transition by ignorance of the issues and by disunity, or it can gather its forces and speak out boldly for an economy which guarantees to all groups their just share of the abundance America can provide.

II

If American agriculture is to take its responsible place alongside the forces which seek to build a better nation, then it must establish a positive attitude toward the millions of citizens who consume its products. Too long have agricultural leaders sung the hymn of hate and oppression. Agriculture, in short, must get the chip off its shoulder.

Speaking broadly, the American farmer developed his "forgotten man" complex in the years following the last war. No realist can deny that they were lean years and that farm prices were not consistent with fair living standards. But it seems to me that agriculture, in remembering this period, should bear in mind two facts. First, that a boom period, with so-called free enterprise running riot, does not imply a comparable farm prosperity. Farm prices were allowed to drop 65 per cent on many important farm staples. One-half million farms were lost in the five-year period following 1921. In the second place, no one did very much about it. It is safe to assume that had government controls (floors and ceilings) been applied, the American farmer might have had a much better time of it.

In the meantime, and more precisely during the war, certain organized farm groups have directed their venom toward labor. Farm leaders have decried labor as their arch enemy. Statistical data has been warped to paint a macabre picture of labor fattening at the expense of farmers. Shares of national income have been compared with no explanation of facts involved. Eighty per cent of the American people are buyers of farm products. It is a strange psychology which finds farmers deliberately antagonizing millions of their customers.

This does not imply that all farm organizations subscribe to such policies. But many do and their influence is great. The following excerpt from the monthly bulletin of a powerful national agricultural organization went to thouands of farmers throughout the country: "Since the peak of the last war annual non-farm income has increased more than 59 billion dollars. It is no secret who is getting the bulk of this multi-billion increase. Organized labor is getting it, aided and abetted by government." To the informed, such a statement is malicious gibberish. To the uncritical farmer it is an invitation to feel sorry for himself.

During a war such sentiments thwart national unity. They will add nothing constructive to agriculture's contribution in postwar national reconstruction. No positive and progressive force can come out of an

agriculture geared to suspicion and hatred toward other basic producer groups.

Broadly viewed this struggle between our two basic producer groups is not personal. The bulk of American labor is but one or two generations removed from the farm. Over five million farm residents today are city workers, many of whom people the ranks of organized labor. It is rather a group phenomenon. Labor as a group snipes at agriculture. Organized farm groups attack labor. And capital, in the middle, uses its influence, wherever possible, to keep these two great groups from establishing a common front.

It is apparent that this conflict contributes nothing socially useful to our domestic scene. It further suggests a fundamental weakness in the national class-type farm organizations, which stimulate and encourage such conflict. Their relationship with members is sustained in terms of the successful application of political pressure. This has created a "get something for the boys" psychology. Often what they "get" is detrimental to other farm groups. Their tendency then, is to maintain themselves by a policy of aggression—against something or somebody. Add to this a condition of chronic jealousy between organizations and one is tempted to ask how genuinely useful such organizations are in the final analysis.

One might go still further and ask how much greater their contribution might be if they devoted their energies toward the fundamental problem of food distribution. Here the basic task of narrowing profit margins between farmer and consumer is still generally unsolved. Monopolies in processing and distribution keep farm prices low and food costs high. Only the cooperatives have made constructive efforts in this direction.

From Arthur Moore's recent article "Tomorrow's Farmer" appearing in *Harpers* comes sober warning of the end product of farm-labor conflict. Mr. Moore says: ". . . if the farmer is committed to a contest with labor, using pressure politics as a weapon, he will eventually find himself out-voted, out-pressured and reduced to the status of a conquered foe." Mr. Moore, calling upon agriculture to see itself in proper perspective, further suggests, "Yet he [the farmer] need not follow his political leaders to indifference or defeat. The same economic forces which reduce his purely political strength increase his economic usefulness. *The longer the assembly line, the more essential is the man who feeds it.*"

Agriculture can well afford a more objective self-analysis. It is no longer the dominant phase of our culture, however sentimentally we regard it. The ultimate solution of agriculture's problems will not come about by a program of national name-calling and labor scape-goating. It is the responsibility of agricultural leaders to reach common agreement upon common objectives. A psychology of antagonism and oppression cannot equip agriculture to play its requisite role as a progressive force in the American community.

III

The present conflict between the unrestricted free enterprisers and those who seek an abundant economy through democratic planning poses another danger to American agriculture. It is the danger that agriculture may be duped by those who are currently trying to discredit federal planning. My purpose is not to urge a program of regimentation and restriction upon agriculture, but rather to interpose a note of caution. Agriculture must choose its friends carefully. To date, the federal government has been the only nonfarm agency which has directly sought an improvement in agricultural status. Before farmers turn their backs on government it may be wise to consider objectively of what value government has been, and may be in the future.

At the outset it should be understood that anti-planners are eager to encourage farm hostility toward government. Capitalizing on farmer antipathy to regulation they miss no opportunity to heap fuel on the flames. An important American steel firm producing a vital farm supply has been conducting a vicious camaign for farm support against government planning. This campaign has taken the form of advertisements appearing in leading agricultural journals throughout the country. It calls for "free enterprise" of the "American" variety and suggests state ownership, control, and regimentation as the impending alternatives.

The February issue of *Nation's Business* offers an article which purports to speak for farmers, carrying the title, "The Farmer Chooses Freedom." It concludes: "The solution of his problems, as he [the farmer] sees it, is to be found in the joint effort of business, labor, and agriculture to maintain full employment. He is fairly well convinced that government cannot do this job."

Again, this time from an agricultural organ, the *Farmer Federation News,* April of this year, comes the following:

> Today government with its deadening hand is intruding into every phase of our American life. It seeks to control every enterprise, it is inquisitive into business and private affairs, it treats honest conscientious men as crooks, it competes with private enterprise, and it is building up a bureaucracy of government employees which already totals millions of men. . . . If we intend to preserve liberty here in America we must rise up and bind government "in chains" as Jefferson put it. We must have freedom from government.

One can only assume that such sentiments do not come from serious and sincere students of agriculture.

This sort of propaganda is dangerous and confusing to agriculture. It offers nothing constructive to the problem of agriculture's relation to the federal government. And it comes at a time when agriculture is particularly vulnerable. Current farm prosperity has created a dangerous optimism. There is a tendency to forget former crises. Agriculture generally resents government regulations which control prices notwithstanding the fact that such efforts have been vital in retarding the inflationary spiral. To admit that such a psychology is natural, is not to forgive it. Too few agricultural leaders have had the courage to speak out openly for the social and economic purposes these federal measures have served.

Here again it is important to emphasize what has happened in the past. It may happen again if agriculture is not wise. Following the last war wheat prices dropped 65 per cent, corn 78 per cent, oats 71 per cent, and potatoes 85 per cent. Over five hundred thousand farm mortgages were foreclosed between 1922 and 1926. Net farm income, over 8 billion in 1919, was less than three billion by 1922. No federal planning was forthcoming to prevent this economic tragedy. This record should give the lie to those who shrug their shoulders and tell us all will be well if we just let the natural economic laws operate.

Farmers wishing to part company with the federal government have a still more recent object lesson to remember. From Senate Document 13, of the 74th Congress comes this revealing comparsion by G. C. Means:

*In America between 1929 and 1933:*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Prices of agricultural commodities fell | 63% | while production fell | 6% |
| Prices of iron and steel fell | 20% | while production fell | 83% |
| Prices of cement fell | 18% | while production fell | 65% |
| Prices of motor vehicles fell | 16% | while production fell | 80% |
| Prices of agricultural implements fell | 6% | while production fell | 80% |

Agriculture was wholly unprepared to meet such a situation. Business, with an eye on its balance sheet, curtailed production and laid off employees. Public purchasing power shrank correspondingly. But in spite of falling prices, farmers maintained production in hopes of breaking even. It is well to remember that we didn't solve one of our problems during this critical period through our so-called system of free enterprise. It was government and government alone who gave our economic system the shot in the arm. And only the federal government was able, or prepared, to assist agriculture. This is not the place for an evaluation of federal assistance to agriculture. It suffices to say that planning was desperately needed by agriculture and that incalculable damage to human and natural resources would have resulted without it.

All this to the point that agriculture must realistically appraise its own limitations. It was helpless to resist bankrupt price drops following the last war. In the boom period which followed it was never able to make its price levels consistent with requirements for an adequate farm income. It had no discipline or technique which could save it from falling prices and decreased purchasing power in the depression years. The forces which seek to alienate agriculture and government today have no interest in agriculture's welfare. Agriculture must take a positive attitude toward government. It must get common consensus regarding areas within which government can best serve the industry as a whole. For if agriculture rejects government, it not only plays into the hands of those who want the scarcity economy of the past, but it may be rejecting its own future security.

## IV

In his stimulating and masterful book, *They Shall Not Sleep,* Leland Stowe gives thoughtful Americans grave warning. He says:

> . . . there is no choice for democracy in this unprecedented world revolution in which we live. Either democracy in the United States and also outside America, will set its course along progressive lines and will progress commensurately with our machine-dominated civilization, or democracy will perish through its failure to improve its functioning and through its refusal to speed its gait. If our own democracy perishes, it will not be in the next century—but in our time.

While the whole of American agriculture is slow to meet these current challenges, American farm cooperatives are already playing a

leading role in a growing progressive movement. Nearly three million farmers make up the membership of this steadily expanding producer-consumer phenomenon. They are seeking economic freedom through the application of broad social and democratic techniques. Their membership, with its urban counterpart, comprises the most critical and best informed national group on the limitations of our present economy. And, with the possible exception of government, they have taken the only constructive steps toward remedying these limitations.

Realizing that monopoly capitalism thwarts the purposes of genuine democracy, these farmers have combined as producers and consumers to establish a community where common men and common welfare are goals to be served.

Farm-producer cooperatives are growing in number and volume throughout the country. Their marketing services not only bring greater efficiency into the field of distribution, but they result in better markets and price returns to producers. Evidence of their effectiveness is to be found in the fact that approximately one-third of our lend-lease food shipments abroad have come from farm cooperative organizations.

But the broadest social perspectives and most telling victories are to be found in the field of farm-consumer cooperation. Here farmers, through combined purchasing organizations, have tackled the malignant growth of monopoly capitalism. Their end product has been more goods to more people at less cost. Their growing file of court victories reads like a second Magna Charta for the common man. Their vigilant and ambitious educational program has built a membership of informed, practical liberals who have a plan of action.

Farm cooperatives are meeting distribution and manufacturing monopolies on the economic battlefield. Regional wholesalers are now located throughout the country. They are taking the sting out of monopoly, not through legal action, but by providing goods and services at fair prices. They are supplying one-quarter of farm petroleum needs. And while they have not as yet seriously threatened any organized line of trade their increasing ownership of production units points in that direction. Farmers seeking to supply their needs now own oil wells, pipe lines, refineries, fertilizer plants, lumber mills, and factories producing paint, tractors, farm machinery and implements, and a growing list of other commodities. Further, they are providing themselves with

a wide range of services including insurance, telephones, and electricity. They are, indeed, the St. Georges of the twentieth century.

One must, however, appraise farm-cooperative influence realistically. While cooperatives represent a strong and liberal agricultural minority, their influence in the whole national community is small. Even should cooperatives eventually dominate the agricultural scene there is question as to their influence on the total economy. Agriculture represents less than one-fourth of our population, and will continue to decrease in numbers. If the positive effect of this practical democratic effort is to be felt by the nation, farm cooperatives must make common purpose with similar progressive urban groups. This leads us logically to organized labor.

Here there are growing signs that such a union may be crystallizing. Leaders of organized labor have endorsed the social and economic purposes of the cooperative method. A few urban-labor cooperatives are already in operation. Cooperative educational matter appears regularly in labor journals, while certain segments of labor are currently studying consumer organizational techniques with a view to future action. But the "big push" has not begun.

The union of these two great producer groups around the social and economic purposes of cooperation would have far reaching implications. Latent within the ranks of organized labor is a consumer power which, if harnessed, would exert a tremendous influence on our economic, and consequently our political system. And it would open the door of practical agreement and cooperation between two of our most progressive American groups. The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada, with growing strength in legislatures throughout the Dominion, is challenging testimony to the progressive force of such a union.

But here again one must be realistic about the facts. Labor has on previous occasions shown great interest in the cooperative approach. Current enthusiasm may, with changing economic conditions, run cold. Labor inclines more naturally to the political approach, although its influence in that sphere makes it one of our most potent social forces. Further, the development of a widespread and effective labor-consumer movement would require considerable time. But the surprising progress of farmers in the past decade should at least be suggestive to labor.

Two interesting differences appear in these groups. Labor has, as a matter of expediency, used the political approach to its problems. Co-

operatives, as a matter of tradition, avoid almost religiously, the political scene. A closer relationship of these groups may encourage cooperatives to become more active politically. While this may appear contrary to cooperative policy there is still a question as to whether they dare avoid the critical political issues of our day.

In the meantime, farm cooperative leaders are becoming more in evidence at labor's conference tables and vice versa. This is a healthy sign and must be encouraged. Nor should labor's failure to carry into action its interest in the cooperative movement be cause for misunderstanding between the two groups. Both are people's crusades in quest for the common rights of men. Their union—politically or economically—promises a potent force for social good. Our efforts must be in the direction of widening and expanding their areas of common consensus.

Man today treads the weary road of progress with a gun on his shoulder. He trades life for an idea. He trades life in a battle to determine how highly we prize the rights and dignities of common men. Only our vision and courage to seek new and better goals for America can vindicate his sacrifice. Agriculture must not default its responsibilities in this crisis.

# BIG BUSINESS AND THE FARM BLOC

*By* RUSSELL SMITH

AT THE POINT IN TIME AND SPACE at which this is written, it looks as if my side was taking a beating. The statistics are well known. They show a pendular swing away from most of the reforms of the New Deal, a trend toward "normalcy," even perhaps a war-weariness. This turn not only is reflected in the Congressional mirror, it is magnified there and elsewhere by a rising volume of buncombe, with its consequent uncounteracted publicity, and by an almost gleeful rejection of executive authority and all its works, good or bad. That is how it looks from here.

Yet from a political and economic standpoint, the past decade has afforded the base from which it is possible, for the first time since the Civil War confirmed the eclipse of feudalism in this country, to go forward, into an era of thoroughgoing political and economic democracy. The war itself has gone far toward completing the vast and beneficent educational process called the New Deal—it has shown what we can do and, regardless of the sordid and the petty in detail, has flung to the wind a banner with a true device. However far we may fall short of it, this device has set up the yardstick of democracy and the Four Freedoms by which the result must be measured. Finally, the attack on democracy at home has begun to arouse the fighting spirit of men of good will and of truly popular organizations.

This arousal may ultimately lead to violent collisions, for the war has entrenched greed and monopoly at home. It has given them a war chest of enormous proportions, and reserves of wealth, controls, and confidence that otherwise never would have come into being.

But on the other side of the ledger it must be remarked that the rank and file are in better shape than ever before, too. They have finished a decade like none before in the spread of the knowledge that government can do something about economic processes, and about the ways in which something can be done. They have more to lose than ever before. Their sons in the armed forces, for the present almost voiceless, know that the

peace need not be lost, and ultimately will have their say. All of this is reflected in the new vitality of truly popular organizations.

The public good is something special; it is not simply the accumulated satisfactions of individual greeds; and the '20's and early '30's proved that once and for all. Thus the great hope of a transition without violence is that the people's side will grow to such strength that the self-interest groups cannot risk an engagement. Just as wars between nations occur only when both parties believe they can win, so in economic conflict real war comes when a balance is struck. The building of an overwhelming popular strength of sentiment, of resources, of organization is the only way to avoid crash and clash alike.

II

One of the popular organizations that is feeling its muscles is the National Farmers Union. Ten years ago it was possible for the Union to join with the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Grange in approving the original Agricultural Adjustment Act, processing tax and all. Today it is not possible for the Farmers Union to join hands with the others on very many things. Why has this happened? It is my belief that it has happened because of all national farm organizations only the Farmers Union continuously reflects the aspirations and guides the hopes of the rank and file farmer. To look back:

The Agricultural Adjustment Act was not a sudden brainchild of the New Deal. It had a long agrarian lineage. In fact, in the 1932 short session of Congress the farm organizations sought passage of a very similar bill. This was while Herbert Hoover was yet President. Nearly all readers will recall the series of McNary-Haugen bills in the Coolidge and Hoover administrations. Of the three vetoed bills in that time two embodied the equalization fee and one the export debenture plan, each in its own way employing government authority to swing the balance of an industrial economy back a little toward agriculture. Back of them was a long series of "farm relief" proposals, all denounced in their day in the words used then to connote what "communistic" does now. The essence of the Commodity Credit loan program was advanced by the Farmers Alliance in its sub-treasury proposals as far back as the '80's. The first Grangers were radicals, and the Grange Creed of 1867 calls for "protection for the weak, restraint upon the strong; in short, justly distributed burdens and justly distributed power."

If the National Farmers Union still stands for the use of the power of government to right economic wrongs, as it does, then what has happened to the other farm organizations? Why do they disagree?

The answer is pretty clear. It has its beginning back in 1920, when the American Farm Bureau Federation was organized. Let one who saw it close up tell what happened in one state. The speaker is Russell Lord, connected with state and federal agricultural work for two decades:

> My first job out of college, in 1920, was to get out newspaper and campaign material for the Farm Bureau sign-up, and on farm and home demonstration in Hampden County, Mass. The situation in Massachusetts was peculiar and in some ways highly instructive. Extension programs there were openly and rather munificiently supported, in certain places, by business interests. . . . My title, Assistant General Secretary, was a disguise. My job was "publicity." The greater part of our salaries was paid not by the state or federal government but by donations of Massachusetts business concerns. . . .
>
> In respect to a trainload of farmers sent to Boston to plead for the establishment of a State Police Force, our standards faltered. It is now, I am sure, an open secret that the Federated Industries of Massachusetts put up practically all the fare and lunches for those farmers. . . .
>
> What had happened sufficiently illustrates the deep water toward which Farm Bureau pressure-politics was leading agricultural extenders, in many places, to warrant mention here. Massachusetts Labor wanted daylight saving. Massachusetts Agriculture didn't. Massachusetts Industry wanted a State Police to put down strikers. Massachusetts Agriculture didn't much care.
>
> Federated Industries and State Farm Bureau leaders made a little dicker. The mildly embattled farmers were to front for a State Police if the Industries would not push daylight saving.

Such was the pattern. The very first county Farm Bureau in Broome County, New York, was promoted by the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce and the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad, and in 1922 Robert McDougall, a former president of the Chicago Board of Trade, said that that organization had made a cash grant of $100,000 to pay out to the first 100 county Farm Bureaus that were organized. It should be added, parenthetically, that the pattern was not uniform. Many county Farm Bureaus were and are representative of farmers, spontaneous forms shaped to meet a real need, and in other instances, county and even state Farm Bureaus have been forced by the rank and file to abandon such alignments in favor of real farmer representation.

And at times the very necessitous pressure of panic and economic chaos has brought businessmen themselves around to support of meas-

ures that would to some extent alleviate distress. The first important pressure behind the equalization fee bills was generated by two businessmen, George N. Peek and Hugh Johnson, of the Moline Plow Company. Enlightened though such business leaders appear by contrast, however, it should be noticed that never have they or their cohorts supported any effort to bring about economic balance *within* agriculture. In agriculture, as in business, they are devotees of the trickle-down philosophy. And even more than in other segments of the American economy, true health in agriculture depends upon establishment of the great mass of average farm families in stability and relative prosperity. The trickles don't trickle very far from the factory farmer and corporation farm down to the farm laborer. In the nature of things, they trickle down hardly at all to the family farmer who hires little or no labor. Thus the real problem of American agriculture, how to give security to the average farmer, is not touched by such proposals.

Those farm organizations that have been diverted from their true tasks no longer represent the average working farmer. They have become more and more like the business and industrial figures whose potent allies they are. This becomes clear if their legislative record is studied. They have attempted to hamstring the Farm Security Administration and ultimately to wipe it out. They have sought to break up the Agricultural Adjustment program by its conversion into a state-administered 48-particled program that provably would not work. They have fought the Food Stamp program and surplus disposal programs generally. They have nearly wrecked federal farm labor programs that sought to use all available manpower.

In sum, in recent years the actions and expressions of the major farm organizations, except only those of the National Farmers Union, have coincided in all important respects with the actions and expressions of the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce. This is not the way to represent American farmers. It is a dangerous abdication of responsibility. And in the long run that course will prove fatal to those who pursue it.

## III

An attempt to catalogue through the years the instances when business and most farm organizations have joined hands would be fruitless. Whatever the surface proofs, it may be taken for granted that there have

been many, many more instances of collaboration that have never seen the light of day, just as today most farm organization leaders fear open alliance with business lest their members repudiate them.

A single sample will do as well as scores, and none better can be found than that offered during the legislative fight over the use of subsidies to minimize the effects of inflation. During the war, the combination of a successful stand against runaway inflation and good prices (plus weather, of course) has meant farm prosperity previously unapproached. Stabilization at roughly the current level gave farmers an income of 22.6 billions last year. Except for the 18.6 billion of 1942 and the 17.7 billion before and in 1910-14, the parity base period for most products, it averaged 7.5 billions. Farm costs have not risen in anything like the same ratio during the war.

As a further argument for a stabilizing program that would hold the line against wild inflation, agriculture has hanging over it the shadow of the '20's. In recent years a ghastly harvest of foreclosures and ruined lives was reaped. Farmers in general have not forgotten that lesson, and nearly all of them right now are afraid of a depression after this war. Putting two and two together, then, the natural assumption would be that farm organizations would be the pillars of the structure of stability, that whatever assaults might be made by others, organized farmers, regardless of other differences, would seek to hold the line.

The record has been very different. From the start, the Farm Bureau and the Grange have attempted to smash the hold-the-line program in the interest of higher farm prices now, regardless of the inevitable sequel of higher wages and higher manufacturing prices. This campaign began with the consideration of the original Price Control Act, which it very nearly wrecked, continued through two drives for a change in the parity formula, and resulted twice in Presidential vetoes of Commodity Credit Corporation bills.

It is not always possible to identify the threads linking the farm organization and business groups, but in this instance Walter E. Reuther, vice president of the United Automobile Workers, pulled a few covers off for the benefit of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee in December, 1943. After describing the formation of the Food Industry War Committee by the food processors and distributors to fight subsidies, Reuther said:

> The food manufacturers and distributors are attempting to use the political power of the farm bloc to put their program over.
>
> In late September [1943] Clarence Francis, chairman, wrote to the American Farm Bureau, the National Grange and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives proposing they get together on October 19.
>
> He proposed that they establish a mutual basis for getting to the public and before Congress their common points of view with respect to subsidies and other objectives.
>
> He promised that the meetings would be secret, with no report to the press.
>
> At least three meetings were held, the first at 10 A. M. on October 19 before the farm bloc leaders met with the President at noon.

Here it should be interjected that newspaper stories describing the formation of this coalition appeared at about this time and probably had much to do with subsequent hasty conclusion of the conferences on the part of the farm organizations.

"The farm bloc leaders turned down formal affiliation with the manufacturers and distributors," Reuther added. "Since these meetings informal collaboration on the defeat of subsidies is reported by both parties to be acceptable."

Among the business combinations that sought open alliance with the agricultural organizations, Reuther said, were General Foods Corporation, Swift and Company, California Packing Corporation, H. J. Heinz, National Biscuit Company, Pillsbury Flour Mills, the Borden Company, and Grocery Manufacturers of America, Incorporated. The heads of the Farm Bureau (Edward A. O'Neal), the Grange (Albert S. Goss), and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (then Ezra Benson) met with the industrial representatives, Reuther went on, but, alarmed at publication of the steps toward open alliance, rejected it in favor of parallel activities.

Indeed, there was little reason for open alliance and much against it. Ordinary working farmers have had little reason in the past to entrust their welfare to big business and industrial groups. Such a partnership is a far cry from the radical agrarianism of the past, the fight for rural education, for smashing of railroad combinations, against monopolies, against usurious interest rates and bank charges.

Here again exhaustive indexing of these legislative proposals would be repetitions. Where in the past farmers' organizations have struggled to combat exhorbitant charges of middlemen, Washington now presents

the spectacle of apparent farmers' organizations fighting the battle of distributors and food processors. Rarely do the Big Four meat packers and the American National or United States Livestock Associations fail to see eye to eye, and as rarely does the National Cooperative Milk Producers Federation fail to carry the ball in the same direction as other organized business groups. The reason is, of course, that such organizations either are dominated by wealthy owners of factory farms or else they are not genuine cooperatives at all but merely distributing and processing firms disguised.

The current session of Congress has seen "farmers" by scores herded to the Capitol to overawe Congress into forcing a break in ceiling prices of livestock, and has seen maneuver after maneuver opposed to payment of subsidies direct to farmers because these subsidies prevented milk distributors from reaping the additional profits for handling that they could command through higher and higher prices.

What the record shows, in detail and in sum, is action by these farm organizations, the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers so precisely dovetailed, so closely similar, as to eliminate any question about collaboration.

The question may be asked, how is it possible for such an organization as the Farm Bureau Federation with a membership of less than 500,000, to exercise the influence it has shown itself capable of exercising? Its membership is only about one-tenth that of the C.I.O. or A.F.L. Part of the answer lies in the very strength of its alliance with business and industrial wealth, its willing action along parallels. Members of Congress know perfectly well that when the Farm Bureau asserts a certain legislative line, that line usually supports a similar line not only of some other farm organizations but also of big business. Thus the Farm Bureau has been in the past—the Grange often assumes leadership now—the spearhead of a wealthy, compact, and powerful alliance. In a way, then, Reuther put the cart before the horse when he said that business "used" the farm bloc for its purposes. Actually, there is little or no distinction to be made between the men who control the farm organizations generally and those who control business organizations. Both the Farm Bureau and the Grange, for example, are actively represented on the agriculture committee of the United States Chamber of Commerce. Therein lies indication of the second reason for this influence.

Essentially, the leaders who operate these farm organizations are big businessmen themselves, and consequently their influence with members of Congress is out of all proportion to their membership. Just as the giant industrial contributors to campaign war-chests have managed to exercise greater political influence than the thousands of small businessmen and have managed to control business organizations, so the upper one-tenth of farmers, the food processors and the other businesses on the fringe of agriculture, have managed to exert great pressure. Finally, they have shrewdly taken advantage of the committee structure of Congress to achieve their ends. The seniority system has placed in many key Congressional positions men who feel they cannot afford collision with these farm organizations. Frequently it is possible to dictate legislation through such key spots because of the difficulty of obtaining a clear-cut vote on a bill, parts of a bill, or alternatives to a bill. A rule under which a bill is discussed in the House, for instance, may be drawn so tight by the Rules Committee that it will prove next to impossible to alter that bill from the floor, and the average member is forced to swallow a measure whole or else be recorded as against. Rarely is it possible to vote against aid to agriculture, however short of the ideal such a bill may be, if the alternative is no aid at all.

The record is there for any to read who will. As to what is to be done about it, there is but one answer. However handicapped by isolation or poverty, the great mass of working farmers must find ways of bringing their real wishes to bear. They cannot afford to permit their real interest to be sloughed off for the further entrenchment of business and industrial groups whose exercise of national power in the past has led the country into disaster.

## IV

In 1914 Congress adopted the Smith-Lever Act, under which the cooperative State-Federal Extension Service system was set up. In that act was, and is, a provision permitting private contributions for the support of this public agency. Back of the act itself and back of that provision was a decade of organization of local Farm Bureaus to promote better farming, many organized by business firms in order to widen their markets among farmers. Some Farm Bureaus were associations of farmers who simply wanted technical help, who could not

foresee then the tribulation that might flow from confusion of public and private function.

They could not foresee that this then innocuous arrangement would lead to a condition wherein for the past three years, in the midst of the most momentous crisis of our democracy, the Extension Services have refused to tell the farmers of this country the facts about the stabilization program of the government of which they are supposedly a part. The Federal Office of Extension has virtually no control and little influence over the State Extension Services that decline to cooperate in such instances, and in many of the key farming states of the Union every important action of the Extension Services is dictated by the Farm Bureau.

The willingness of the Farm Bureau and of some Extension Services to oppose a war program of a war government is but one of the fruits of Farm Bureau domination over Extension. In many of these states public funds are spent to propagandize for this private farm organization, and in many counties the county agent is forced to conduct the membership campaigns of the Farm Bureau. It is to perpetuate and extend its control of these state systems that the Farm Bureau has turned on much of the federal legislation it helped to father in the days when agrarian distress forced it do so. This is why it seeks to discredit the Farm Security Administration, a straight-line federal agency, and this is why it has turned against the A.A.A. This is why it pressured Congress into wrecking the joint federal-state-local agricultural planning program. And this is the reason for its curious proposal for limiting the Secretary of Agriculture's jurisdiction to research agencies and turning the action programs of the Department over to the states.

The complex relationship of the farm organizations with big business works out in even more complex shapes in its local manifestations.

Latest of these monotonously similar maneuvers was the attempt of the Farm Bureau a day or so before the Christmas (1943) recess of Congress to slip through an appropriation bill that would have given to the State Extension Services complete control of the farm labor program, a program it already had hamstrung through various amendments. In hearings on this bill a Farm Bureau representative appeared with representatives of four State Extension Services and announced he would speak in favor of them. Yet the Federal Extension Service

did not favor the bill and even the Association of Land-Grant Colleges, to which the State Services are joined umbilically, flatly asked Congress not to put such power in the states.

Well may the colleges begin to take stock of a condition that has led them far astray from the straight paths of democratic education. Two instances out of many scattered over the country will suffice to show the curious shapes that business conquest of agriculture and its institutions assumes in the states. One of these is in Iowa, the other in New York.

The Iowa instance is fairly well known by this time, and probably will become even better known when the American Association of University Professors concludes its inquiry into accusations that restraint of academic freedom was involved in Iowa State's withdrawal of a war food pamphlet for revision after a storm had been aroused by its assertion that "margarine compares favorably with butter both in nutritive value and palatability." Withdrawal of the pamphlet for revision followed pressure upon President Friley from dairy interests that resulted in his meeting with a hundred of them and in the designation of a review committee composed not of faculty members alone but of the very economic interests that the scientists were supposed to regard objectively. The chairman of the editorial committee that had sponsored the pamphlet was Theodore W. Schultz, head of the economics and sociology department. In the aftermath, Schultz resigned in a letter to President Friley that made the butter-oleomargarine incident but one of a series of accusations that academic freedom no longer existed at Iowa State. Since his departure, Drs. Walter Wilcox, A. G. Hart, and Margaret Reid of the original editorial committee also have resigned. Thus the reputation of Iowa State has been gravely damaged, one of the finest staffs of agricultural scholars in the country has been cut to pieces, and the cause of agricultural science has received a setback.

All of this has flowed from the yielding by the college to a pressure group it felt was too strong for it, not alone because local Iowa dairymen protested but because these protests were backed up by a powerful combination. Significantly, representatives of the American Dairy Association and the National Dairy Council arrived from Washington in the midst of the campaign for withdrawal of the pamphlet.

It is significant, too, and heartening, that the connection of the Iowa Farm Bureau with this affair forced its president, Francis Johnson, to take to the air in a defensive radio speech and is generally believed to have had much to do with the selection of a new president, Allan Kline. The lengths to which a business-agriculture coalition can lead caused profound disquiet in Iowa.

Such disquiet has not yet reached the surface in New York but it is growing. At Cornell University, the question of academic freedom in agricultural science has not been openly raised. Rather, the disquiet attaches to the economic and political complex centered about H. E. Babcock, chairman of the board of trustees of Cornell and former guiding genius of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, active in the national campaign to break price ceilings. A fellow trustee is Frank Gannett, founder of the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, with lines running to various farm organizations, the America First Committee, and Father Coughlin. In fact, Gannett is so prominent a member of the board of trustees of Cornell that the trustees last year invested $400,000 of Cornell's endowment fund to enable Gannett to add the *Binghamton Press* to his chain of twenty-one newspapers.

Gannett also is chairman of the board of the *American Agriculturist,* of which Babcock is one of the owners and for which he writes a column. To complete the picture, Babcock also heads the Grange League Federation, a big farm supply firm jointly owned by the Farm Bureau, the Grange, and the Dairymen's League, thus neatly reflecting in New York State the national alliance that has been revealed in hearing after hearing in Washington.

All of this, however, could be very well. It is the ends to which this combination has been put that is the major concern. What does the record show? In the *American Agriculturist* of February 28, 1942, with the country as a whole rallying from Pearl Harbor to begin its long fight toward victory, Babcock was writing that the expansion of dairies and poultry flocks that the war effort required "is extremely hazardous as far as the Northeast is concerned and is not in the public interest."

With that keynote a steady campaign has gone forward to oppose national farm policies, a campaign abetted everywhere by the Grange League Federation and closely related to Governor Dewey's political

fortunes. Its ultimate objective was the cracking of price ceilings. Last year Dewey appointed the New York Emergency Food Commission with Babcock as chairman, which toured midwestern grain-producing states and returned with a report that duly emblazoned a feed shortage scare in the headlines of New York newspapers. A steady barrage of similar statements has followed, when as a matter of fact grain shipped into the northeastern states nearly doubled in the three years before 1942 while volume of livestock and livestock products increased only about 15 per cent. There was no basis whatever for the scare, least of all that part of it for which the Grange League Federation was responsible. A survey last fall showed that its members had far more than normal supplies of mixed feed on hand.

The objective of all this, of course, was to destroy confidence in government farm programs, the O.P.A., and the general hold-the-line program. Erection of the feed shortage specter was timed with the drive by livestock and dairy interests for smashing ceilings in those industries, its peak being reached at a time when the Cooperative Milk Producers Federation had succeeded in forcing hearings on a bill designed to eliminate price controls in the dairy industry by Congressional edict.

## V

The matter of this article is too serious to call forth mud-slinging, dealing in personalities, or petty controversy, and the particular has been cited only as it seemed required to illustrate the general. For that reason alone have individuals and organizations been named. The issues are much greater than such individuals and organizations.

In 1855-60 agricultural exports annually made up 82 per cent of all exports; by 1925-30 they made up 37 per cent of all exports. In 1880 farmers owned on the average a 62 per cent equity in their farms; by 1935 they owned but 39 per cent.

In those figures can be read a transition from one world to another. The nation's economy has been ruled for more than three-quarters of a century by industrialists, and the natural consequence of that rule has been the usually conscious, sometimes unconscious, squeezing of the agricultural interest. This domination has meant not only that agriculture was depressed, but that only those in agriculture who followed the industrial-business pattern achieved success. This was possible for but a

very few. Moreover, the ideas and customs of business have been made into the guiding concepts of the few who did achieve more than a bare living out of farming.

Thus agriculture as a whole, despite the recent prosperity of many farmers, is still a depressed industry. In the war all classes of farmers have been better off than they were before, but those who most needed to better their condition still need to do so. Fifty per cent of farmers still sell about 90 per cent of the commercially sold farm goods, and as long as this obtains, agriculture will continue to be submerged and a weight on general prosperity.

Another by-product of industrialization is reflected in the following table showing by main types of farms the investment required for establishment of a typical family farm of economic size, that is, one that will yield a reasonably good living:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wheat | $16,050 | Southern Wisconsin | $11,400 |
| Wheat-corn | 25,900 | Central New York | 8,550 |
| Wheat-grain sorghum | 13,200 | 2-mule Georgia | 2,300 |
| Hog-dairy | 12,900 | Mississippi Delta | 2,500 |
| Cash grain | 27,600 | Black Waxy—Texas | 5,900 |
| Hog-beef raising | 10,500 | | |

This table tells its own story of investment far out of proportion to return, of appalling regional imbalance, of steadily contracting possibilities for average farmers. It is clear that the forces that have brought about these conditions are forces more than sufficient to account for the business-farm organization alliances which have been referred to earlier. And it is clear, too, I think, that reliance purely on mechanics of price will never change these conditions. Many other things are involved besides simple provision of higher farm prices: Expansion of cooperatives for the very smallest farmers, encouragement of division of great farms into family units, more intensive farming, direction of technological research to the needs of small and medium-sized farms, technical assistance of the Farm Security type on a grand scale, great extension of low-cost credit.

There is not too much disagreement about the main elements of the economic problems of American agriculture, however, nor is there very much more disagreement as to what steps ought to be taken to work them out. Rather than add to that literature of reform now, it is

expedient to look closely at aspects of the matter that have not been threshed over to any great extent.

These aspects have to do with the mechanics of political democracy. One is the function of pressure groups, and here the lessons to be drawn from the facts just recited are clear enough. The whole theory of any conceivably genuine free enterprise is based on the dickering, bargaining, and maneuvering of differing economic interests. Inevitably, these are expressed through organizations. If such groups fail to exert their pressure on behalf of those they should represent, if they use their position to forward the interest of another, and sometimes inherently hostile, group, then the competitive situation goes to pieces. There can be no true conflict and compromise of opposed or different interests in such a condition. And if conflict and compromise are removed the way is paved to the establishment of the corporate state and fascism.

This is the possible end of the dark and dangerous path upon which some farm organizations are walking. There is no legislative panacea for this evil. At bottom, the reform will have to come from farmers themselves in the reassertion of their need for true and adequate representation by their leaders.

But in addition, there is another product of failure to represent accurately the wishes of the great mass of farmers, for as substitute for such a mass base at least one organization has sought strength through control of public officials and expenditures of public funds to promote its own growth and to extend its influence. It has been able to do this because of a policy of drift and makeshift, harmless and well intended enough in the beginning, but deadly now. The origin of these practices lies in the misty mid-region of federal-state relationships, and is the inevitable sequel to the failure to adapt political mechanisms to changed conditions. The Extension Services were set up in response to a real need, a need that still exists, for bringing technical information and counsel to farm people who couldn't get it otherwise. The device that was used was the system of federal aid to the states. The need remains and the device must be used unless a better can be found, not only for this purpose but for others.

As it appears now, the system of federal aid is the only workable way to bring to poor states the share of national wealth required to give all children an equal educational break. It is being used now in

the federal-aid highway program, and it may well be greatly expanded in the future to include medical care, public works, and other programs. Has it, then, proved so dangerous, as manifested in the operations of the Extension Services, as to justify its being discarded? If so, what is to take its place?

To answer the second question first, there is no perceptible alternative save further expansion of the central government's activities. Whether this would be wise or not depends simply on the kind of central government that the country has and on the nature of the programs in question. If the problems cannot be managed through the federal-aid system, then by all means they should be handled federally, without fear of the size or power of the national government so long as we are careful to see to it that the national government is administered in the interest of all the people. The question of federal and state jurisdictions can only be considered rationally in the light of the jobs each is best fitted to do, rather than as a desperate issue in the joining of which the handiest weapon must be seized.

Once this question is settled, there should be less difficulty in defining the boundaries of another set of jurisdictions, the federal and the local. And here is perhaps the primary problem of political science in our generation. National programs, such as the national agricultural programs of the past decade, cannot be administered in 48 separate jurisdictions. The problem is national, the solution is national, and the mechanics in the long run will have to be national. Yet each of these programs in its diurnal detailed operation may be of more immediate impact and even of more ultimate importance to the individuals it touches than the more sweeping and general legislative enactments of Congress. Administration in such a situation becomes of overwhelming importance. Yet the individual has little or nothing to do with the selection of the men who so affect his life, and he may have little or nothing to do with the policies they follow. He votes for the members of Congress who represent him, true, but those members cannot administer. All they can do is to provide general directions to administrators in the legislation they enact.

It is in this vast jungle of local-national relationships that it is most pressing that new highways now be cut. Fortunately, the past decade has proved a fruitful period of experiment in this respect, so far as agriculture is concerned. Seven years ago the Brookings Institution

sponsored a study of the A.A.A. by the eminent economists, Joseph S. Davis, Edwin G. Nourse and John D. Black, at the conclusion of which Black described the elective farmer committee system as "the most significant" of all aspects of the A.A.A. undertaking.

His judgment was an understatement. But it is not only through the A.A.A. and not only in the fields of production and marketing that there has been successful experimentation. In addition, the soil conservation districts, aided by federal funds and technical help but operating under state law, were initiated by the Soil Conservation Service. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the land-grant colleges cooperated in still another kind of joint approach through the land-use planning committees. The Farm Security Administration developed medical-care and facilities cooperatives, as well as various types of farmer-official committees. All of these have afforded their precepts for the future. It now remains to strengthen and improve the good, to go forward from this beginning, too, into a new era of expanding democracy based upon the fullest possible participation by all groups in matters of economic concern.

An indispensable preliminary is an end to private persons acting as public ones and to public persons subserving private interest.

What it comes down to, in the end, is simply a process of thinking clearly and acting directly to see to it that farm organizations perform their own functions in their own field and no other, and that likewise the national, the state, and the local government each has its respective job to do and that it does it for the good of the whole people.

In brief, let us render the right things unto Caesar.

# SMALL FARMERS BELONG IN A PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

*By* P. ALSTON WARING *and* WALTER MAGNES TELLER

THE WAR is a symptom of crisis and change in our society. As farmers we know that agriculture is struggling for adjustment. It becomes imperative that farmers discover the character and direction of the world which is being shaped. For those of us who are family farmers the question is whether society is being molded in the service of the common man by the forces which are now at work.

It is obvious that there is not yet any well co-ordinated progressive movement containing such groups as organized small farmers, organized consumers, and unions of industrial workers, but it is also clear that the growing forces of monopoly are bringing awareness of common interests among these groups.

In the 1890's in the ruthless days of industrial expansion farmers revolted against the domination of the chief political and economic instruments of society which had subjugated them and had almost stifled their capacity to share in the great expansion of America. The farmers' political movement of those days was the last fling of our early agrarian society against the dominant industrialism. It failed and farmers have never gone back to political action. It failed because it was merely protest and never built a program which demanded that agriculture take its rightful place as a partner in a new technological society.

The situation today is the outgrowth of the conditions which existed when the Populists were defeated. Industry has assumed greater control of society and not until the present war with its vast demand for food have the American people come to realize the importance of food, and therefore, of farmers, in our national life. Moreover something has happened to agriculture. It too has taken on certain characteristics of a technological society. It no longer has the unity which it has previously always had. The tendency has been, as in industry, toward bigness and monopoly on the one hand and toward poverty and dispossession on

the other. And the big farmers of modern agriculture have greater common ground with big industry than with small farmers.

What then is happening to small farmers? There are many of them. They produce much of the nation's food and they unquestionably represent a democratic institution which has been one of the foundations of American liberty and American strength. Have they found any common ground with those other sections of society which find themselves confronted by the political and economic power achieved by industry which has continuously and successfully secured for itself greater control? For instance do small farmers see that they have mutual interests with industrial workers in such an economy as is developing? Do they understand that their well being is dependent on the general economic security of all consumers? Our impression is that they do not except in certain distinct instances and in certain localities.

There is as yet no widespread farmer-labor or farmer-labor-consumer movement. Our agriculture is suffering as always from sectionalism. Georgia farmers are likely to vote Democratic on the issue of white supremacy rather than on issues of farm policy, while western farmers cling to their traditional Republicanism which is a hangover from the days of the Homestead Act. In Pennsylvania small farmers will consistently vote the Republican ticket even where that party is dominated by the industrial machine which has no concern or understanding for the farmer's problems. And it is a commonplace that farmers fear the organization of industrial workers on the ground that labor unions are pressure groups which advance the price of commodities which farmers must buy. Moreover farmers have never regarded themselves as consumers but always as producers and do not realize that, as they have moved more wholly into a business agriculture based upon the use of industrial equipment, they are now buyers as well as sellers. There are other reasons why small farmers have failed to recognize their identity with nonfarming groups. Perhaps the most important of these is the fact that large numbers of the widely circulated farm papers are owned or controlled by industrial interests which seek to advance their own ends.

But not all small farmers are isolated or confused. Some clearly see their position in modern America and the course they must take if they are to survive and maintain their liberties. In order to understand

this transitional period in which we farmers find ourselves it is necessary to think in terms of the whole agricultural picture.

## II

To be a farmer in modern America is not to live in rural seclusion. It is living in the midst of American life. And American life is none too easy, even for the most fortunate of us. Perhaps struggle, experience, growth are the essence of the democracy we are striving to extend. We farmers have known economic depression for the last twenty years. We have begun to see and to feel the result of our wasteful and destructive use of land, and many of us are now pitting our small efforts against the accelerated forces of wind and rain in an effort to earn a living from soil which has lost its fertility. Many have lost their farms and have become tenants. Many have been driven into being rootless migratory farm laborers, moving from harvest to harvest, living under the worst conditions.

One needs to know how men and women fare on the land. What are the facts, not the sentiments, about our agriculture?

We are part of a large group of citizens for there are some 6,000,000 farm families, all told, making up one-fourth of the population of the nation. Agricultural income is small. Of the six million farm families in the last census year, 1940, nearly four million, or well over half, had an average value of products sold, traded, and used at home of less than $1,000, and 1,500,000 of these families had total gross incomes of $600 or less. Although during the war farmers have been receiving an increased income for their products, still in 1942 two-fifths of all farm families had an income of $930 or less. In the crisis years of the last decade about three and a half million rural households received assistance from a public or private agency. And this is probably an understatement. For farm families, as the government reports indicate, will struggle along, half starved and penniless, long after a city family would ask for aid.

A large percentage of the "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-fed" of the nation live in the country and it will add to the picture of what we mean by rural poverty if you know that only 9 per cent of the farm houses in the nation had indoor toilets in 1934, about 18 per cent had electricity, less than 4 out of 10 had water pumped or piped into the dwelling,

and only 1 in 13 had provision for hot and cold running water. Moreover about 17,000,000 rural people live in 1,338 counties that have no registered general hospital, and 1,000 counties have no public health nurse. In 1936 nearly a quarter of a million rural women had no physician's care at the time of confinement, and more than one baby in ten was born without benefit of a doctor's care.

But all farmers are not poor. This is perhaps the most interesting aspect of the situation. There are people on top as well as people on the bottom, and these two groups seem to be getting farther and farther apart. The big farmers are getting bigger and the small farmers are growing smaller all the time.

We are told, when we try to discover the cause of this, that technology, the development of machinery suitable to large-scale operation, is the explanation. However, we think the cause is more complicated. That we have big and little farmers, that at the top farmers are big and at the bottom small, seems most natural in our kind of society. Bigness and smallness exist in every other branch of our capitalist economy. Why should they not exist also in agriculture? Our farming is a business farming. It has been so for a long while. Seven-eighths of the gross farm income is drawn from sales and only one-eighth is made up of products used by the family on the farm which produces them.

As farmers it has become essential that we learn this lesson about general trends and general pressures to which all are subject. The forces of our economy make it possible for some farmers to become big and successful, and these same forces shove others down the ladder to insecurity and want.

It is easy to say, "I can win out. I can be successful." It is easy to feel yourself different from others. We were prone to say these things and to feel this way just as many a man tackling farming is prone to feel that he can beat in a hard game. To be sure, we had seen men fail and suspected it was none too easy to make good. And though we realized that it meant knowledge and hard work, still we relied on our strength and wits. This is common among farmers.

To rely on one's strength and wits is not enough. Today it takes more than that. We believe there will have to be changes and modifications in the way farmers do things, and in the policy of government

which helps plan the nation's agricultural life. We believe also that small farmers must take common action with other groups in society whose basic interests are similar.

The three million small farms include some that are almost non-commercial since their sales are secondary to products used by the farm family but most are small farms which produce chiefly for the market, with some production for home use, and rely heavily upon family labor. However, even in this low-income group there are some who employ a little wage labor. These are the farms and the farmers about whom we are talking. They run from the subsistence place all the way up to a fairly complete commercial agriculture. Above them are the commercial farms whose gross income is larger, and which in our technological society, tend to become bigger. At the top are the 250,000 farms with gross incomes of $6,000 or more operated by working farmers who employ hired help or capitalist farmers who never soil their hands with labor of field or barn.

These are not rigid classes and the groups tend to shade imperceptibly one into the other. But the last twenty years of low prices and agricultural depression before the war have swept tens of thousands of medium-income farmers down into extreme poverty. Failure to make a living on the farm is, of course, nothing new. As long as plenty of free land or cheap good land was available many discouraged farmers moved westward and sought better luck on another place. Now, however, a man cannot go west. He must try to work it out on poorer land, for there are left only the eroded farms.

This widening of the economic gap between big and little farmers is a chief characteristic of our farm situation, and it is the result of fundamental forces pushing down upon agriculture. We sometimes think of farming as belonging to another kind of economic society from that of the rest of the country. It is not that way at all. Farming is very much a part of our capitalist economy, and just as elsewhere there is the struggle between poverty and monopoly. Those who could harness the industrial revolution in agriculture to their own ends have thus far come out on top. Those who could get capital were able to mechanize, and these farmers have forged ahead, often at the expense of the land they tilled. Many small and middle-size farmers got machinery, too; many took advantage of new developments in soil practice and seed culture.

But many did not; many could not. It was not because they were dumb either, or backward or poor farmers. We know this is the case from observation in our own neighborhood. When a family has known poverty for three generations poverty does something to its members. They have little schooling, their clothes are poor, and they are loath to go up to town to seek information from the county agent. Many of them do not know there is a county agent. For this and other reasons the county agent system has tended to serve the class of farmers which started with advantage. Where some family-size farmers tried to hold on by increasing their mortgage in order to buy machinery they have not infrequently suffered foreclosure after a bad crop year and found themselves forced out and on to poor land or out on the road as migrant farm workers.

Then there is absentee landlordism. Family farming has been based on farm ownership especially throughout the northern and central states and yet today almost half of our total farm acreage is held by absentee landlords. If you take the average value of land and buildings reported by all groups (owners, part-owners, managers, tenants) the farmer who owns all his land and carries no mortgage is now in the smallest group though there is at present a tendency for some farmers to reduce debt.

Depending on how you look at it this is a serious situation and a great divergence from the past. Are small family farms, operated with a degree of security, on their way out of our civilization? To Thomas Jefferson and our forefathers individual ownership of the farm by the family operating it was an ideal associated with democracy. Moreover, it has always been the policy of the Department of Agriculture to regard the family farm as important and its retention as necessary. On the other hand there are those who would imply that the small independent operator cannot survive because his bargaining power is weak when dealing with the great, highly organized businesses of today such as the farm-machine factories, milk trusts, chain stores and such.

Jefferson's ideal is sound and practical in our twentieth century America, but only if it is adapted to present conditions. The family-size farmer, if he clings to his rugged individualism and rugged isolation, cannot survive. The growth of tenancy is an indication of the break-

down of the system of small independent farmers as it has operated in the past. There are too many things working against it unless it fits its pattern to modern life. Perhaps this is not altogether the correct way to put this. Perhaps we small farmers should not have to do all the adjusting. For instance, for almost a century the nation has protected by high tariff walls industrial commodities but not farm commodities. We are not saying that the nation should protect farm products likewise. Far from it. But gross inequalities exist in our industrial society, inequalities which include an inequitable distribution of the national wealth and income, and laws which protect nonagricultural groups more than agricultural groups. National policy has certainly favored the city over the country by guarding the living standards of many urban producers through minimum wage legislation and social insurance without extending a similar protection to farm producers. Perhaps this has come about because farmers have not been organized, and have not demanded attention.

Now we are in the midst of crisis. We have been deluded with the idea that this was a nation of boundless resources and that our farms could provide all the food which we would ever need. In our emphasis on scientific developments of seeds, feeds, fertilizers, and animal husbandry, and in our zest for inventing new machinery we neglected to take note until recently of what was happening to our soils and to the farmers who were to use these tools of a scientific age. Now we are at a crossroad. The nation needs food in quantities never demanded before, though we have long needed it for a higher standard of living. Half of our farmers, whom society has been pressing downward for a generation or two, are not prepared quickly to rise to the occasion even with the incentive of better prices.

They have eroded land to contend with, small credit, and little accumulation of capital. Tenancy is high and with it insecurity of tenure. And behind these men and women in many cases are long years of hard living, poor education, enforced low standards of life. We cannot forget the past when thinking of the future.

Farmers are capable of rising to the challenge of this emergency. But it will mean in many cases, among many groups of farmers, especially small farmers, and in certain sections of the country, adjustments to new methods, new standards, new uses of soil and new

methods of marketing. In many instances this cannot be achieved by farmers unaided. There will have to be planning on the part of government and new approaches on the part of the Department of Agriculture in guiding farmers. Men cannot always pull themselves out of a situation by their own boot straps. But when there is a combined attack on the problem by all the people of a community and their government, the latent talents emerge, new men arise out of the agricultural population, and increased production begins to flow into the markets of the nation.

The best example of this on a regional basis is to be found in the Tennessee Valley Authority. Here is remarkable proof of what a community can do to resurrect itself when its total problem is thought of and there is a total attack. We have traveled among the farmers of this region and learned to know some of them. There is new hope and new determination to succeed, a heightened sense of belonging to the community and in many places a changed and heightened community spirit. Someone said after a visit to the T.V.A., and we do not think this is an overstatement: "I saw the resurrection of life and a new world in the making."

We are not going into all phases of what the T.V.A. has done or is attempting to do. But we want to say that we are thrilled by what can happen to men on the land when a new idea and a new determination strike them, and when a sound cooperation develops on all fronts among the people and between the people and their government.

When men grow tired of the individual struggle against growing odds; when farmers become willing to give up their old individualism and take on cooperative individualism then will there be some chance of a stable and permanent agriculture in the United States. Perhaps regional developments like the T.V.A. will be the logical organization of the future. If you can judge by what is happening to farmers there it is a method we can ill afford to ignore.

The war is emphasizing the weaknesses and inequalities and crying needs of farmers, but it is also disclosing their importance to the nation and their tremendous capacities. For there are great untouched capacities in our American agriculture. We are convinced that the nation can convert its wasteful, exploitative system of land use and food production into a permanent agriculture for the future where there will be security

for farmers and abundant food for the people. But neither the nation nor farmers can wish this permanent agriculture into being. There must be planning and hard work and a willingness to think in new terms.

## III

The dynamics of modern life have divided agriculture. One half has appeared to find itself, to adjust itself not only technologically but to other groups with similar interests. Big agriculture is at home in modern America and is conscious of its destiny. The little man on the land is still groping to find his place and his adjustment. As yet he is inhibited by deep-rooted traditions, by isolationism and frustration. One of the most necessary requirements for his adjustment to present-day conditions is that he find and cooperate with those groups with whom he has a common economic bond.

A beginning has been made. The Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America clearly conceives of its place in the kind of society which we have described. Its members understand that organization is necessary and its leadership appears to be aware that family farmers need both community solidarity and cooperation with organized labor and organized consumer groups. The Farmers Union is attempting to build economic security through widespread cooperative action and a people's movement which will relate working farmers to city workers and consumers. It realizes that the well being of farmers ultimately rests in an economy of abundance and therefore it opposes any planned scarcity, monopoly, and exploitation. It believes that political democracy can only be achieved in rural communities if there is built sound economic democracy as well and therefore has stressed along with education and legislative activity the building of local cooperatives.

The Farmers Union has consistently championed the Farm Security Administration in its fight for survival. Back of the fight is the whole question we have tried to pose: What is the destiny of the small farmer in America?

F.S.A. was brought into being by the problems which have been piling up on little farmers for the past hundred years. We have spoken of many of them. But only after four years of depression that began

in 1929 were we as a nation forced to admit that all was not well in our agriculture.

We had to face the unpleasant fact that 42 percent of farm operators were tenant farmers and that their number was increasing by 40,000 every year and that every year one-third of the farm tenant population moved. Suddenly it became apparent that farm debt was intolerable, that wasted soil and one-crop farming were related to rickets and hookworm and malaria. Farmers were being tractored off the land at the very time that the cities could not give them employment. We saw that for many people farming was harsh and ugly.

Local government broke down in this crisis. Rural people, as well as urban, were facing starvation. Federal government had to find ways to help millions of farm people who were trying to exist on less than two dollars a week per person. It began an experiment which eventually became the F.S.A., and this experiment was better than relief for two reasons. First, in the long run it cost less; second it helped the farmer to help himself instead of remaining dependent indefinitely upon government. In other words F.S.A. developed rehabilitation instead of relief.

Doubtless a degree of prosperity among farmers has dissipated some of the New Deal mood. Enough time has passed for many to forget the Holiday Association, which organized farmers' "strikes" in 1932-33, and stubborn Milo Reno. Are we going to forget how during the 1930's rehabilitation was carried out by government aid? Are we going to forget that the aid helped because political power was used to increase the common man's social power? While the crisis for some farmers temporarily evaporates because of higher prices and employment opportunities in war industries, the fundamental causes of the small farmer's problems remain. The future of F.S.A. will in large measure depend on the small farmer's ability to use his brains and to enlist the support of those other groups which can understand that the people's cause is not divisible and that the small farmer is an essential citizen in an America built upon the common man.

Who can understand this matter? What groups have already made a beginning in reducing the gap that has traditionally existed between city workers and farm workers?

Organized labor is the farmer's friend. Some day both farmers and workers will completely understand that fact. This knowledge will in-

evitably come since farm income and labor income have usually gone up or down together. Labor buys what the farmer sells, and the farmer buys what labor produces. Any program that seeks to divide farmers and workers is based on a clear understanding by the opposition that it is important to their interests to divide friends.

Murray D. Lincoln, executive secretary of the Ohio Farm Bureau, pointed out in a recent issue of the *Ohio Farm Bureau News* that farmers are "a minority group as far as votes are concerned" and must therefore unite with other groups if they are to influence national legislation. He goes on to say, "A very successful Boston retail merchant once said that no business ever really succeeds that fights its customers. And I am sure that farmers are not going to improve their chances of success if farm leaders keep up their present criticism of labor."

We think Murray Lincoln's point is well taken. We doubt that the Farm Security Administration could have been saved the past two years if small farmers had not had staunch friends among labor and consumer groups. And if the Cooley Bill for permanently establishing the principles of the F.S.A. is to be enacted into law it will require vigorous cooperation and action on the part of farmer, labor, and consumer groups.

But farmer, labor, and consumer groups have much to learn about working with one another. First, all three groups can support progressive legislation that affects any one group. This very coming out into the open in support of public measures will go far towards bringing about better feeling and relationship. For example, if all small farmers could know that organized labor is supporting the Cooley Bill it would tend to show them where their real friends are. And if small farmers would understand the issues involved in a strike of the workers in a tractor factory rather than complain that their tractor parts are being held up, the situation for both parties might conceivably improve more quickly.

Second, mutual cooperation by farmers and workers in the distribution of farm commodities can be greatly increased. We know of an example in a large southern city where industrial workers have already begun to buy through their own consumer stores the agricultural products of organized cooperating farmers. This thing can be multiplied a thousand fold and it will work for the strengthening of agriculture on the family farm level and the heightened standard of living of workers.

Organized workers as consumers are not the only consumer groups with which farmers must have good relationships. The cooperative consumer movement has grown swiftly in America during the last decade. Citizens are far more aware of themselves as consumers than ever before. Traditionally consumers have always been interested in the well being of industrial workers and farmers. They are concerned with the economic and social status of the people who make the things which they buy and use. This fact is a basis on which a strong bond can be built between the people of city and country and should be utilized by organized farmers in their attempt to strengthen themselves in the coming era of social adjustment. As consumers become better organized in their self-interest they too are having to meet opposition from many of the same forces which have fought against organized labor and working farmers. The drive to tax cooperatives includes consumer as well as farmer cooperatives and labor organizations. And this very drive is indicative of the fact that these groups have common aspirations.

## IV

Reaction is a product of war. The present trend in America is no exception to this rule. Though small independent farmers have not always placed themselves in the progressive and liberal camp, and we realize that many do not yet, nevertheless the economics of the situation has changed. Certain elements in agriculture are on the side of reaction. The small farmer, no longer part of a unified agriculture, finds himself seeking his place on the side of those who are working for economic security and abundance rather than managed scarcity by the concentration of wealth.

It seems to us that these liberal forces are still unco-ordinated among themselves and lack strength in numbers and in organization. Labor is far better prepared to meet the situation than farmers or consumers, and farmers will unquestionably have to learn the lesson of organization. Farmers have always been hard to organize. They have done so in the past as protest. Something more than protest is needed for the coming years. When the Farmers Union talks about a people's movement, as it is doing today, perhaps there are here the elements of a new kind of organization for farmers.

We are not at all sure that we are ready in America for such political action as is represented in the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada. It seems to us that before we can have effective political action, existing progressive groups will have to be greatly strengthened through organization and education.

One thing, however, is certain to us. The small farmer should have a place in a democratic America after the war. He cannot get it by sitting tight and doing nothing. He will have to believe in his destiny and work for it and he will have to place himself firmly among the progressive forces of the nation.

# BRITISH FOOD CONTROL

*By* BEATRICE GOMBERG

Food control has been a striking success in Britain. It is difficult to think of another economic issue in that nation which has been handled more smoothly. Without sacrificing a jot of its plan to use food as a fighting weapon, the British government has earned wide public support for its food control system. In fact, some of the food innovations, introduced to meet wartime emergencies, are so popular that they will not be easily scrapped after the war.

This achievement must seem the more remarkable because, as America knows too well, people react more violently to food shortages, real or fancied, than to most other wartime deprivations—and there is nothing imaginary about the scarcity or disappearance of many common foods in Britain! Indeed, the contrast between America's abundant food supply and Britain's meagre civilian fare is so sharp that it seems incredible to find food an issue in the United States but not in Britain. How the British have managed to make food control both effective and popular is an instructive story.

Food occupies a strategic spot in British life which Americans may not fully appreciate. We never have had to fear that the enemy could seriously harass our food supply, though we have seen minor interferences with imports of coffee, bananas, and spices. Britain, however, relied upon imports for fully two-thirds of her food before the war. Quite apart from the dangers of a U-boat blockade, the diversion of shipping facilities to military uses might threaten actual starvation unless home production was increased, imports regulated, and food distributed equitably. Recollections of World War I, when food shortages, inflated prices, and queues were common, persisted strongly enough to convince Britons of the necessity for government food control in the event of war.

As early as 1936 a Food Department was set up in the Board of Trade and given the specific task of mapping food policy for wartime. Rationing, price control, and other measures were thoroughly planned, and, after Munich, stores of essential foodstuffs were built up. When war was

declared the nuclear Food Department was expanded and raised to the status of a Ministry. The new Ministry of Food, together with the Ministry of Agriculture, exercises broad powers over food at every stage—from the farm to the dinner table. There has been surprisingly little conflict and overlapping between the two Ministries concerned with food, unlike their American counterparts. Perhaps the fact that the Ministry of Food decides questions of rationing and price control as well as commercial-distribution policy accounts for the harmony; there is no division of power between a War Food Administration and an O.P.A. in Britain.

## II

Food production is the first and key problem. Deprived of much imported food by shipping limitations and losses, Britain had no alternative but to grow most of her food at home. And grow it she has, though agriculture had been on the decline since 1890. The area under cultivation has been increased from 12 million acres in 1939 to 18 million acres in 1943, an impressive expansion for this tiny island. Less than one-third of the nation's food supply is now imported (including lend-lease), in contrast to two-thirds before the war. Britain is at the moment the most highly mechanized farming country in Europe, and the average agricultural worker's output, in terms of food values, has risen 60 per cent since the war began. Crops of potatoes are up by 80 per cent, vegetables by 55 per cent, and the yield of wheat, barley, oats, rye, and mixed grain has risen by some 65 per cent. The past year's record harvest approached 100,000,000 tons, and it is said that the caloric output of Britain's soil is 70 per cent greater than before the war. Potatoes may be monotonous, but they have kept the nation much more healthy than anyone dared to hope.

How was this achieved? Not, you may be sure, by prayers and pleas alone. It is rather the effective combination of financial incentives, restrictions, and guidance which is responsible for the success of home production. The program has been threefold: to secure the greatest increase of production compatible with the resources available for agriculture, to make production as efficient and economical as possible, and to induce farmers to produce the various crops in the desired proportions. The first objective has been very nearly attained in this fifth year of war. It was done by a wide variety of measures:

Government subsidies of $8 to $80 per acre for land brought under the plow (subsidies vary according to type of land and use of it).

Loans for the purchase of fertilizer which is low-priced through previous subsidies.

Grants for land drainage.

Minimum quotas of acreage to be plowed in each county.

Pooling of agricultural equipment and renting or borrowing tractors from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Fixed agricultural prices for the duration and a guaranteed market for the duration and a year afterward.

A national minimum wage for agricultural workers and greatly increased earnings for this underpaid group.

A large and mobile Women's Land Army and an auxiliary labor force at harvest time.

An extensive victory garden campaign (with a fascinating adjunct called Pig Clubs).

The second objective, efficiency of farm operation, is considered so serious a matter that the Minister of Agriculture has been given the power to eject an inefficient farmer from his own land. In practice, the government has hardly had to use this right; very good results have been achieved by the ever-present threat of action. Authority has been vested in committees of local farmers so that no taint of London bureaucracy should tinge the proceedings. The local committees surveyed and graded all farms: class A are well-farmed, class B need assistance, and class C farmers are candidates for dispossession unless they mend their ways. In one county the local committee was bold enough to place more than half of their neighbors in class B and an additional 15 per cent in class C. The power these committees wield is revealed in an amusing story concerning a landlord whose woods were full of rabbits. When the landlord refused to shoot the rabbits, which did not bother him but did destroy his tenant's crops, the local committee sent in ten men to do the job, though this was a flagrant violation of the landlord's ancient sporting rights.

An entirely different sort of efficiency has been promoted in food processing through the concentration of industry program. If the XYZ Biscuit Company uses only three-fourths of its plant and Sunny Bakers Company could produce its normal output in the unused plant, the Ministry of Food can compel Sunny Bakers to move in with XYZ, thus releasing the former company's factory space and some of its workers for war work. The two companies will produce their crackers as one company,

substituting the name "Victory Biscuits" for their old brand names and splitting the profits according to a prearranged scheme, perhaps in line with their prewar share of the cracker market. Additional economies are realized by limiting the types and shapes of crackers to a few standard biscuits, and by bulk packaging. Actually, about 2,000 workers and 900,000 square feet were released by the first steps toward concentration of the cracker industry. In the meat industry, the number of slaughterhouses has been reduced from 16,000 to 705 by the introduction of communal slaughtering. The chocolate and candy industry has released 50,000 workers and several million square feet of factory space through the concentration program. These are very important achievements in a country so starved for labor and short of factory space.

Perhaps the most instructive aspect of Britain's food production policy is the planning of the nation's food budget and the means by which farmers are encouraged to produce the desired crops and livestock. Foods with high nutritive and vitamin content, particularly those which can no longer be imported, have first priority, while luxury foods are plainly discouraged. Crops which can be consumed directly are favored over animal feed, since the latter gives relatively less nourishment in the form of meat. Milk cattle take first place among livestock, with beef and sheep next because they can feed on grass as well as grain and they fertilize the soil. Pig and poultry farms are discouraged because they are heavy consumers of grain, but backyard raising of pigs on refuse seems to be a national hobby.

Three main methods are used to obtain the programmed crops: limitation of farmers' supplies, price differentials, and subsidies. The rationing of livestock feed is an example of the limitation of supplies. Farmers are told, in effect, just how many cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry they may keep, and many pig and poultry farmers have had to go out of business as a result of the decision not to import animal feed. But the rationing of feed has assured the nation of a large supply of milk, one of the cornerstones of the national nutrition policy.

By fixing agricultural prices for the following season, the government tells the farmer which crops will be most profitable. Great pains are taken to make profits highest on the foods deemed most nutritious, without permitting exorbitant profits on any product. In any case, the farmer's increased costs and higher profits need not be translated into higher

prices for consumers. The Ministry of Food sells many foods at less than the farmer's selling price and sometimes at less than his cost of production. No political fuss has ever been made about subsidies—because they were familiar to farmers before the war, because agriculture still plays a minor political role, and because subsidies are a rather minor feature in the rigorous government control over the sale of many crops. If the farmer is required to sell only to the government, he takes his money without stopping to figure which part is legitimate price and which part subsidy.

The significant fact, however, is that British farmers have not engaged to any great extent in the tactics of our farm pressure organizations which seem chiefly concerned with coining money out of the common necessity and danger. Practically no one in Britain demands a return to "a free play of the forces of demand and supply," as the Gannett food conference and American farm groups are doing. Nor is the widespread acceptance of government control due to extremely high profits in farming. Agricultural prices in Britain are quite high because farm wages have risen considerably, farming was quite unprofitable before the war, and the marginal farms must get adequate returns during the war. However, the stiff excess profits tax applies to farmers, and the larger farmers now pay income tax on their annual profits rather than on the less sensitive index, the annual value of their farms.

## III

The Ministry of Food bears no enmity towards the wholesale and retail distributors of food; in fact, it is the explicit policy to interfere as little as possible with the commercial channels of distribution. But the Minister of Food has found it increasingly necessary to regulate marketing in all its phases.

The scarcity of food plus the decision to enforce ceiling prices create distribution difficulties which are not evident in peacetime; for example, during the war, farmers may withhold their produce in order to force higher price ceilings, or they may sell to the black market at illegal prices; the nearby cities may get a disproportionate share of the crop, or restaurateurs may outbid retailers whose selling prices are more strictly regulated; wholesalers may fail to put aside stocks for the lean months when there is no harvest or when ships are diverted to special military uses, such as the North African invasion.

The Food Ministry's methods of dealing with these problems may be indicated briefly. The Ministry is the sole purchaser of many products at the wholesale stage, including almost all imported food. This at once guarantees that essential foods reach the market and are disposed of according to a national plan and at the legal prices. Where the Ministry does not purchase directly from the farmer, it may appoint private traders as its agents or permit only licensed dealers to make purchases from farmers, thus making life more difficult for black marketeers. With elusive products like eggs, the Ministry of Food resorts to an ingenious device; the farmer may sell to an authorized egg packer at a higher price than the retail grocer may legally charge his customers. Unauthorized dealers, therefore, can not make a profit unless they use black market channels, and farmers have no incentive to sell directly to retail stores. The authorized packers sell to retailers at a price which enables the latter to make a profit while charging the legal price; the difference between the packers' two prices is covered by a government subsidy.

All milk has to be marketed through a Milk Marketing Board which enforces price ceilings, sets aside milk for commercial use, pays premiums for tuberculin-tested milk, secures an adequate distribution of milk regionally, and compels dairymen in the larger cities to redivide their market so that they avoid overlapping deliveries. On many other foods, the government pays a transportation subsidy in order to render it no more profitable to sell fish, for example, in a coast town than in an inland city.

In most cases the ownership of food passes from the Ministry to wholesalers, but such products as meat are sold directly to retailers, bypassing the wholesale stage. Distribution of most foods is regulated by the maximum price orders which are set by a single agency, the Ministry of Food, for every stage of distribution. Only rarely, therefore, is there a "price squeeze," except perhaps among inefficient producers, superfluous middlemen, or operators of luxury stores.

All food dealers must have licenses from the Ministry of Food in order to remain in business, and an infraction of the food regulations can bring suspension or revocation of the license. Wholesalers can sell food only to dealers who surrender "buying permits." The value of these permits depends, in turn, upon the number of regular customers registered with the retailer. Housewives must register with a particular retailer for

each "controlled" food and, thereafter, make all purchases of that food in the one store. This tight system assures every consumer of his fair share of the basic rationed foods without standing in line or endless shopping around.

## IV

The strict control of production and commercial distribution has its parallel in the machinery for distributing food to consumers. The British, like ourselves, have a system of equal rations, but they also make several departures from equality. It is this recognition of divergent needs, both dietary and economic, among various classes of the population which has produced the popular innovations—those most likely to endure if present public opinion does not change.

It is true that Britain, with a sparse food supply, is under the greatest obligation to consider the special dietary needs of groups such as children, diabetics, expectant mothers, or heavy industry and outdoor workers. A country such as the United States need supply extra rations and priority rations only when a vital food (milk or eggs) becomes scarce or expensive and practical substitutes are not available. But both countries face the problem of maintaining the health of the low-income groups in spite of scarcities, rising prices, and deterioriation of quality. On both issues Britain's record is far superior to our own.

Early in the war Britain decided that the health of its children was a national responsibility. Lord Woolton, the former Food Minister whose successful tenure of office earned for him the new position of Minister of Reconstruction, said: " . . . the Government resolved that we should strain our resources to the utmost to insure that our children would be spared from malnutrition . . . the health of our children is more precious than money." In accordance with this decision, children under 5 are entitled to three to seven times as much milk as adults and twice as many dried eggs. For the first five days after delivery to stores, oranges are reserved for the holders of children's ration books. For four bleak years oranges were so scarce that this privilege was of little practical value; now, however, oranges are coming in great quantities from South Africa and, it is hoped, they will be arriving soon from Sicily, along with lemons.

Expectant and nursing mothers are granted larger allowances of milk and eggs than other adults, and expectant mothers can secure a child's

ration book, in addition to their own, when they produce a medical certificate of pregnancy. Hospitals and certain types of invalids are also favored in the distribution of eggs, milk, and cheese. And miners, outdoor workers, vegetarians, and diabetics can buy two or three times as much cheese as the ordinary citizen because these special groups need more protein in their diet. Certain concessions with regard to cheese, meats, and fats have also been arranged for orthodox Jews and Moslems. Without the assistance of American lend-lease food the Ministry of Food might be unable to maintain the special rations, for Britain's home production of animal protein is hardly enough to guarantee a minimum for the entire population. Lend-lease food is not so important for its bulk as it is for its supplementation of a drab and meatless diet. Fully one-fourth of Britain's animal protein foods are furnished by the United States through lend-lease, and it is to Britain's credit that these supplies have been used so wisely.

Admirable as the special rations are, they take second place to another feature of British policy which makes basic foods available to needy people at reduced prices or without cost. The National Milk Scheme permits nursing and expectant mothers and young children to purchase a pint of milk every day at half the retail price. If the family income is very low, the milk is given free. Over three million women and children have benefited from this scheme, and about the same number of school children have received free or cheap milk in their classrooms. Many children have also been given hot lunches in schools at no cost to their needy parents. Concentrated fruit juices and cod liver oil, as well as vitamin preparations, are distributed free for very young children, while a six weeks' supply of vitamin capsules is available to expectant mothers, at no cost, if they are in need. Some of these measures seem remarkably like New Deal reforms of the '30's, but it is significant that Parliament has seen fit to adopt them during the stress of war, at the very time that Congress tried to shelve them as luxuries.

Price control, not merely the enforcement of price ceilings, has also helped the low-income and fixed-income groups in Britain. In April, 1941, the government decided that the cost of living should rise no further. This decision has actually been upheld—a heavy taxation program and a successful voluntary savings campaign have taken the pressure off prices, and food prices have been rolled back through the extensive use of subsi-

dies. It was estimated that the expenditure on food subsidies was $840,000,000 during 1943, the equivalent of several billions for the United States in view of our larger population and higher price level. The cash outlay on subsidies seems so much cheaper than the social cost of malnutrition and inflation that Britain accepts subsidies almost without a dissenting voice. Government regimentation is not such a bugaboo as it is here, perhaps because Britain has felt the war more deeply. After all, Pearl Harbor was not a Dunkirk nor were the New York practice raids quite a London Blitz.

Wartime necessity has produced changes which would have been scorned by Englishmen in peacetime, and yet these innovations have grown so popular that they may outlive the war. Such is the case with communal feeding. A whole series of circumstances have made it necessary to feed people outside their homes—the difficulties of filling lunch-boxes under rationing; the disruption caused by air raids, evacuation, transfer to distant factories, and long hours; the movement of married women into industry; and the need for economical and scientific food preparation. The communal eating places called "British Restaurants" are operated by city or town authorities on a self-supporting but non-profitmaking basis. Originally designed for bombed-out families, the "British Restaurants" are found all over the country now and are patronized by all classes. There were over 2,100 such restaurants by the middle of 1943, serving an average of 618,000 meals a day at very low prices.

Even more important are the industrial canteens, without which, said Ernest Bevin, the country could not have come through the war. Many factories and most mines, docks, and construction sites are too far from commercial eating houses to permit workers to buy hot meals. The alternative of dry sandwiches became increasingly unsatisfactory as working hours lengthened and sandwich filler grew scarce. As part of its thoroughgoing industrial welfare program, Bevin's Ministry of Labour introduced the industrial canteen. These canteens provide light snacks to break up the monotony and fatigue of a long shift as well as hot, full-course meals in factory cafeterias. The good will of factory managers has not been responsible for the growth of the canteens, for they are compulsory in all factories employing more than 250 workers. Over 51,000,000 meals per week are served by the more than 10,000 canteens in factories, docks, building sites, and mines. The accessibility, attractiveness, low

cost, and nutritional value of the canteen meals are responsible, in part, for the fact that there has been no serious breakdown of health among British workers. Even the schoolchildren have been part of the communal eating movement. In June, 1942 only 14 per cent of the schoolchildren were given hot midday meals, but by the end of last year the proportion had risen to one-fourth with increases registered every day. When account is taken of the various types of mobile canteens and emergency feeding centers, it is clear that communal feeding is very widespread.

The establishment of these inexpensive restaurants did not completely offset the advantage enjoyed by people who could afford to eat in the expensive restaurants. For a long time it was a public grievance that those with money need not suffer any of the deprivations of rationing. The first move to correct this situation was a regulation limiting the number of courses which could be served at any one meal in a restaurant. More recently, ceiling prices have been placed on restaurant meals so that the food served may not be priced higher than a dollar, no matter what restaurant a patron chooses. A meal can still cost far more than that because heavy cover and service charges are permitted. Far more effective has been the apportioning of supplies to restaurants in accordance with the number of customers and their special needs; the largest per capita rations are allotted to canteens feeding workers in heavy industry of particular importance to the war effort; somewhat smaller rations are given to places serving all other industrial workers; and the smallest supplies are available to every other type of restaurant. This sort of differential rationing has done its part to maintain the health of the most essential workers and to nullify the advantage of wealth.

If one reviews the food program of Britain so briefly, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the British system is well-nigh perfect. This is, of course, not true and an Englishman would be the first to admit it. There have been many changes and improvements in Britain's food system during more than four years of war, some of them in direct response to public criticism. But throughout a basic agreement about objectives and methods has been present—a unanimity entirely unparalleled in America. Underlying the measures which have made British food control a major achievement are a few broad principles: in production and commercial distribution of food, a careful appeal to the business instinct combined with the sacrifice of certain individual rights; in

consumption of food, a strong sense of social responsibility with emphasis on equity as much as equality.

## V

As time passes less attention may be paid to the role of food in winning the war and more to the good effects of wartime food experience on postwar health and eating habits. Many British nutrition experts have already declared that the war was the best thing that ever happened—dietetically speaking, of course. No one would have elected war as the means of dethroning fish and chips from its place of honor in the national diet, but as a minor consequence of war it is quite acceptable. Not that anyone is sure fish and chips will not return—but there is hope that the younger generation will avoid the nutrition pitfalls of prewar England. Dr. Geoffrey Bourne, a research fellow in the Royal College of Surgeons and the Royal College of Physicians, recently made a survey of nurseries, schools, and canteens in the Midlands. He announced that the health of the average child has actually improved during the war, and this conclusion is supported by other authorities and the official statistics. Dr. Bourne declared:

> In the next generation we shall get a handsome dividend from these features of our wartime diet. . . . Children's food tastes are likely to be entirely different from those of their parents. In nursery schools it takes only a few days for toddlers of 2 to 4 to develop a liking for the unusual foods necessary for scientific feedings. In ordinary schools it may take as many weeks, and, in a factory canteen, perhaps a similar number of months—among older people the liking may never come at all.

It would seem most important, then, to concentrate on the children; and this means making cod liver oil, orange juice, and milk available to youngsters after the war on the same terms as they have received these foods during the war. If a war-torn Britain could afford free cod liver oil, it is difficult to see why it will be too expensive for a postwar world. The continuation of hot meals and milk in the schools is part of the new Education Reform Bill; in fact, the bill proposes to make hot meals and cheap milk universal in the schools. Aside from this proposal, nothing has, thus far, been done to perpetuate any of the wartime innovations. But we may expect considerable pressure to maintain factory canteens, the National Milk scheme, and even the British Restaurants. The latter, of course, will be most contested in peacetime. Not only do these government

restaurants compete with private enterprise, they are able to charge such low prices because much of their help is voluntary service. After the war the volunteers may not be an issue, but the government might then have to subsidize the restaurants in order to keep the labor costs from raising meal prices. In either case, opposition is likely from private business and people who fear the break-up of family life, but there will also be a strong contingent on the other side.

Some of the gains which will probably carry over into peacetime are the sort that might have come without a war, but not so soon. False and misleading advertising about the vitamin or mineral content of foods became an offense just a few months ago, but this safeguard of the public health will be difficult to dispense with after the war. The fortified bread and margarine seem likely to last, though the National Wheat-Meal loaf, a wartime necessity, may disappear. It seems strange to us that pasteurization of milk should be hailed as a reform, but in Britain many people believe milk purification to be silly, dangerous, or both. The government's recent proposal to purify milk is limited to certain areas of the country, an indication of the strength of the opposition, but in time we shall probably see the entire country abiding by the rule that it shall be illegal to sell milk unless it has been heat-treated, tuberculin-tested, or comes from a certified herd.

The wartime food policy has controlled the kind and quality of food available to the public and, for the first time, has placed human needs above economic position. The nation's health has improved, even under the stress of war, and scientists such as Professor J. R. Marrack attribute the gain largely to the scientific diet. Professor Marrack (of the Chemical Pathology Department at London University), in urging the continuation of scientific feeding after the war, summed up the case very well: "We now have satisfactory evidence that a food policy in the postwar world based on human needs would lead to a great improvement in national health and physique and would eliminate the worst evils of poverty and at the same time provide the basis for agricultural and economic prosperity."

# OUR POSTWAR CONSUMPTION OF FOOD

*By* MARION CLAWSON*

NO PROBABLE LEVEL and distribution of national income in the postwar period will provide all segments of our population with incomes out of which they will spend enough money to provide a minimum adequate diet. Our agricultural plant is capable of producing sufficient food for a minimum adequate diet for all and even superior diets for the majority of people. The conjunction of these two facts points to the necessity of subsidized food consumption, if national welfare is to be maximized. It is not too soon to begin planning for "freedom from want"; the methods whereby food consumption can best be subsidized need early exploration and discussion.

Off hand, these may seem sweeping statements. It is my purpose here to give them amplification and logical support.

## I

It is not easy to define a minimum adequate diet, nor to measure the total family income necessary to achieve it. Nutrition specialists often consider an adequate diet to be the quantities of food which will provide the various essential nutrients as given in the Recommended Dietary Allowances of the National Research Council. These allowances are not minimum but rather optional recommendations, but most authorities agree that so-called adequate diet plans should be based upon them. A low cost diet, including these quantities of food, at September, 1943 prices, would have cost about $150 annually per person, in families of average size. These estimates by specialists may involve a degree of skill in planning, buying, and preparation of food that is unlikely to be attained by the average housewife. Moreover, people expend money to satisfy psychological as well as physiological needs. Tobacco, alcohol, and movies may not contribute to physical well-being, but they so satisfy certain desires

* The views expressed herein are wholly personal, and are not the official attitude of the Department of Agriculture or of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

of many people, that part of their incomes will be used for such purposes even though their diet be inadequate. Any realistic consideration of diet must recognize that food competes with other elements of living. A mere summation of minimum expenditures needed to provide some minimum level of diet, housing, clothing, and other necessities will not indicate the income needed for people to make these expenditures. Some larger sum will be necessary to provide also for those items which many people believe are needed, even though they make no demonstrable contribution to physical well-being.

The exact proportion of the total population whose diets fall below the minimum adequate level depends largely upon the definition of "adequacy." By any reasonable definition, a large segment of our population has diets inadequate from a nutritional viewpoint, and inadequate because of inadequate family income. The most comprehensive study yet made of income and diet was the Consumer Purchases Study of 1936, sponsored by the Works Progress Administration, Bureau of Home Economics, and Bureau of Labor Statistics. As a result of that study, the well-known statement about the "ill-fed one-third" came into existence. In the 1935-36 period of study, from 27 to 45 per cent of the families had annual incomes out of which they were unwilling to spend enough for an adequate diet, the exact percentage depending upon the definition of adequacy used.

It may be objected, rightly, that national income was at a low level in 1935-36 and that an unusually large proportion of the population had very low incomes. With the much larger national income of 1941, 1942, and 1943, not only has the average family income increased but the number of families with very low incomes has decreased sharply. With the higher prices prevailing in 1942 over 1935-36, however, many families must have been unable to allocate enough income to food purchases to provide adequate diets. Their number probably was fewer than in 1935-36, but they were still uncomfortably common.

Some would say that full employment and the high national income associated therewith, plus generous aid to unemployables, would provide everyone with an income out of which he would be willing to spend enough to buy an adequate diet. A few comparisons throw some doubt on such a happy outcome. If we assume the distribution of national income remains as it was in 1935-36, a national income of roughly $300 billion

at 1935-36 prices or roughly $370 billion at 1926 or 1942 prices would be necessary to provide the average family of the lowest income group with enough purchasing power, willingly to spend enough for a fair diet. With the income distribution of 1942, these figures could be decreased somewhat but could scarcely be cut in half. These figures should be contrasted with the assumption of a postwar national income of $100 billion made by Mr. Alfred Sloan of General Motors, which seems to have drawn praise for its optimism, or with estimates of perhaps $140-150 billion made by some planning groups. The National Resources Planning Board in its "Postwar Plan and Program" report submitted in early 1943 urged more generous programs of public assistance in the postwar period. No specific figures are given, but from the statements made, it appears that the aid they recommend would have to be approximately doubled in order to provide every family with an income from which it would willingly spend enough for a fair diet.

A substantial proportion of the population is almost certain to have incomes below the level at which enough will be spent to obtain an adequate diet, even with maximum efficiency in spending for food. This proportion might be as low as 10 per cent, but this would seem to be the absolute minimum to which it could reasonably be expected to fall.

If one takes a less optimistic view of the future, the proportion of families with insufficient income to allocate enough money for adequate diets, may be much higher, perhaps as high as or higher than in 1935-36. The number of families in this category would be important in working out the details of any program to provide them with adequate diets. But for our present purpose, the essential fact is the certainty of a significant fraction of the total population with incomes adequate only for poor diets. If these people are to be properly fed, they must have special assistance in addition to education regarding improved diet.

## II

How desirable is a minimum adequate diet for everyone? Are we serious about Freedom from Want? Or do we believe "the poor have ye always," and that nothing can or should be done about it? These questions may be answered on ethical or on more coldly economic grounds.

Perhaps a personal credo should be stated: I believe every human being has a right to enough to eat. We may disagree over the definition

of "enough"; and there is more to Freedom from Want than adequate diet. But enough and proper food is surely the basis for physical well-being. Adequate nutrition for the Hottentot is as important for the Hottentots as adequate nutrition for the American is to Americans; but for the present, let us concentrate on minimum adequate diet for everyone in this country. We, at least, have the physical resources to provide it if we can only have the social wisdom.

Less idealistic, but perhaps more convincing, are arguments that minimum adequate diet is "good business," that it "pays." Numerous experiments and wartime experience have demonstrated that well-fed people produce more than poorly-fed people. Animal nutrition studies have shown the same thing. If people are poorly fed, they cannot earn enough to feed themselves and their children properly. If they are properly fed, their incomes may become higher and their capacity to buy nonfood products increased. Perhaps one of our largest potential markets for industrial products is our poor people. If their health, productivity, and income are increased by means of subsidized food consumption, they will be able to buy much larger quantities of industrial products.

## III

Agricultural productive capacity in the United States, or available to it by means of foreign trade, will permit raising all diets now below the fair level up to that level, without impairing better diets.

Throughout the period between World Wars I and II, the United States had agricultural "surpluses." These were greater volumes of agricultural products than could be moved into consumption at prices acceptable to farmers, or perhaps at any prices. Some of these surpluses we gave to foreign countries, through the medium of loans which they were never able to repay but which purchased our agricultural (and other) products. Some small amounts were actually given away to needy groups in this country. Larger amounts were not produced, because we paid farmers to shift to other crops. Large amounts were on hand when World War II came. If all these actual or potential surpluses had been consumed by the groups in this country that needed them most, a substantial improvement would have been made in their diets.

In the period between the two World Wars the process of farm mechanization resulted in a large decrease in numbers of work horses and

mules. This released large acreages of crop land for the production of human food. This process has not yet run its course, and in the postwar period further substantial acreages will be freed to produce human food. Improved productive processes have also increased the volume of food production from the same acreage of land and often from the same amount of labor. Notable in this connection has been the introduction of hybrid corn, which has raised the acre yield of corn approximately 20 per cent. Another major technological development is the artificial insemination of dairy cows. Through use of superior sires, the volume of milk from the same feed supply can be increased as much as 35 per cent. These are but two of the more important such developments. In total, their effect may be large.

There are considerable possibilities for new land development in the United States—by irrigating present dry lands, by drainage of wet lands, and by clearing of cut-over lands. Most of this land is in the West or South. In total, something like 30 million acres of crop land might be added to our productive plant. Because these lands would probably average somewhat higher in crop productivity than the average crop land of the United States, such an acreage would be equivalent to nearly 10 per cent of our present crop area. Some expansion in acreage is probable in the postwar period, although the maximum ultimate development is unlikely to take place immediately.

The war has demonstrated that the production of agricultural commodities can be readily expanded under stimulus of favorable prices. Total agricultural production in 1942 and 1943 was about 25 per cent above annual production in the 1935-39 period. Favorable climatic conditions were surely a factor in this increased production, but it was achieved with a less favorable labor supply and a less favorable machinery situation than had prevailed previously. In the postwar years, when machinery, labor, and supplies can be made available, agricultural production can be increased if demand justifies it. In fact, "surpluses" are almost sure to arise in two to four years after the close of the war unless some program is adopted to increase food consumption within the United States greatly. After World War I, our surpluses were largely wheat, cotton, corn, and other nonperishable commodities which could be stored in the hope that time would provide some answer to the problem. After World War II,

any surpluses which develop are likely to be chiefly in livestock products, which cannot be stored for long.

The price control act of 1942 contains a provision often overlooked; in our present concern over rising prices, we forget that a price floor for farm products equal to 90 per cent of parity is promised for two years after the war is over. For a time, demand for food in the war-torn countries is likely to maintain prices of agricultural commodities at high levels in this country. There is almost sure to come a time, hastened and aggravated if a severe "conversion" depression sets in, when prices of all agricultural commodities will not remain at 90 per cent or more of parity. The agricultural bloc is almost certain to strive for governmentally-supported farm prices, and is likely to have some success. Pressure for stimulated domestic food consumption is likely to come from the agricultural producers, even if it involves subsidy.

It is generally agreed that relatively free foreign trade is an essential element in the high national income and employment which we all desire. If we are to export goods, we must import something. While we may export some agricultural products, the volume will probably be relatively small. Imports of agricultural products are likely to be much higher than previously. If we need more food than we can readily produce, there are great opportunities for obtaining it from abroad and at the same time promoting industrial employment at home.

Through increased production at home or increased exports, or both, enough food can readily be made available to raise all diets to their fair level, without impairing the diet of anyone who is now better fed.

## IV

The best answer to unfilled need for food and adequate agricultural productive capacity (or even agricultural surpluses) seems to be subsidized food consumption. The purpose of such subsidy would be a provision of a minimum adequate diet for everyone, and the subsidy would be particularly important to low income groups.

"Subsidy" is a distasteful term to the average American; it is in particularly bad repute just now. Instead of trying to conceal it by some disguise, probably transparent, a wiser course seems to be frank recognition of the existence of subsidy. Definition of subsidy and examination

of its occurrence and character may point the way to its general acceptance. Subsidy seems to have three essential characteristics:

1. A service or an income is made available to a particular group of our total population, without a charge based on the use of that service or acceptance of that income. The economic position of the recipients of this service or income is improved by reason of the subsidy.

2. The cost of this service or income is borne by a group, usually larger, which may or may not include some or all recipients of the service or income. The members of the cost-bearing group are often unaware of the fact that they are carrying the costs of the subsidy. Commonly, the cost-bearing and benefit-receiving groups are not identical in membership. In the rare case of costs and benefits to each member being equal, subsidy would no longer exist.

3. The recipient of the subsidy gains an increased income or service only by use of the subsidized income or service. The pattern of consumption is influenced by the subsidy; often, changes in consumption deemed socially desirable are the full reason for creation of the subsidy.

Our American economy is shot through with subsidy. Our public school system, much of our system of communication and transportation, a large part of our medical and hospital service, many of our libraries, and our general governmental functions are largely or wholly the result of subsidy. Our tariffs constitute a subsidy benefiting some industries at the expense of some consumers. The American farmer has been heavily subsidized, by cheap land, by publicly financed research, and more recently by direct grants of funds such as A.A.A. parity and benefit payments. Congress has subsidized itself, by appropriating public money so that the restaurant serving Congressmen could maintain lower prices. The number and forms of subsidy are legion; to start to enumerate them shows quickly how common is subsidy.

Most of all of the subsidies mentioned arouse little or no antagonism on the part of the general public. Though an overwhelming majority of our people find the very word "subsidy" distasteful, most of them are the recipients of one or more forms of subsidy and it is apparent that it is only the form of a particular subsidy which is distasteful. Some subsidies are socially acceptable, others are not. What is responsible for social acceptance? Curiously enough, this problem seems not to have attracted our social scientists. One essential characteristic for social acceptance seems to be actual, or at least apparent, opportunity for everyone to share in the subsidy. The public schools appear to be open to every child, and atten-

dance to a certain age is often compulsory. Actually, public schools are not open to children whose parents cannot afford to dress them in such manner as to avoid acute embarrassment, or to children whose parents must follow the crops in order to earn a meager living. A tuition-free state university is not really open to all, because many cannot provide themselves with board, room, clothing, and books while attending. A tariff protects all who produce the commodity covered by the tariff, and yet conditions within the industry may effectively prevent the entry of new firms. Instances of apparent rather than real opportunity to benefit by subsidy could be multiplied many times. Yet the appearance of universal application seems basic to social acceptance of any subsidy.

Other characteristics of subsidy needed for social acceptance can be cited. The purpose of the subsidy must be one which the majority of the populace endorse or respect. Thus, publicly-supported art galleries are probably endorsed by large groups who never patronize them. The administration of the subsidy must be moderately efficient, or at least not noticeably inefficient. If the recipients of the subsidy are considered "worthy" and needy, this may aid in social acceptance of the subsidy, but it is scarcely essential. Large manufacturers benefited by tariffs are not needy, and many would doubt their "worthiness." Yet the tariff is one of our most respectable subsidies. In part, this comes from the claim that the American standard of living is protected by tariffs. Identification of a particular subsidy with some emotional symbol is probably a surefire means of insuring its public acceptance. "The American market for American goods" carries an emotional appeal that endorses tariffs. An appealing slogan, even if not logically sound, is extremely helpful.

## V

If food consumption is to be subsidized, what criteria should a program meet? The major factors for consideration are:

1. The program of food subsidization should actually provide food up to the minimum adequate level to those who would not otherwise get it. The existing dietary deficiencies should be met by means of the foods whose consumption is stimulated by the subsidy. Since more than one combination of foods will often produce the same improvement in nutrition, consideration should be given to the food habits of the groups being aided. For instance, restriction of the subsidy to foods not commonly

included in the diet of certain needy groups would lessen their participation and the effectiveness of the program. The subsidy should be extended in ways that will enable and encourage its use by the most needy. Sociological consideration of the groups most in need may be fully as important as purely administrative consideration. Cultural factors which find expression in dietary preferences should be given particular attention. Minority cultural or racial groups such as the Negroes and Mexicans, who have dietary preferences differing from the majority of the population, may require special programs.

Aid to those most in want of it need not preclude aid to those who would in any case have a minimum adequate diet or better.

2. The subsidy should be socially acceptable. If our previous conclusion regarding general availability of a subsidy as an essential for acceptance is sound, this means that the subsidized food must be available to all income groups. Extension of subsidy only to those "in need" or to certain low-income groups carries a certain stigma. Large numbers of persons eligible for public assistance and for food stamps during the 1930's did not avail themselves of these aids, preferring to do without rather than to accept the social stigma attached to public aid based on a means test. The means test should be abolished as a criterion for participation in the program, as should any other equally obvious and invidious test. Abolition of a means test would have other advantages, such as easier and cheaper administration and absence of evasions. The appearance of full availability to all income groups could be maintained and yet the subsidy largely benefit low-income groups. For instance, a milk depot in a poor section of a city would chiefly benefit low-income people in the neighborhood.

3. The program of subsidized food consumption should not operate to discourage consumption above the minimum adequate level. Any program will probably aim at providing only the minimum adequate diet; anything more would probably not be socially acceptable, and perhaps less justifiable economically. Yet the minimum adequate diet is by definition only a minimum, with a low safety factor, and less than many persons will secure. Food consumption above the minimum should be encouraged, not only in the interest of greater safety in nutrition, but also because of the personal satisfactions from a more ample and varied

diet. The program should avoid a sharp break in cost between those units of a product considered necessary for a minimum adequate diet and additional units. For instance, a quart of milk daily per person might be considered necessary for a minimum adequate diet and made available to all or to selected groups at a reduced price. If the cost of additional units remained unchanged, this would tend to restrict consumption to the subsidized level. As an economist would say, the marginal cost of a product should not exceed its average cost, or consumption above the minimum adequate level will be discouraged.

4. The program should be simple and easily understood. Perhaps this requirement should outweigh all others. Even the most intelligent supporters of wartime price control have been vexed with O.P.A.'s complex rules. Perhaps this requirement is negative, since several programs might be equally simple. Even though this requirement gives little guide to an administrator, it is an important warning.

5. The program should make evasion difficult, not through use of complex regulations but by removing all profit from evasion. If the subsidized food were available to all on equal terms, there would be no reason for evasion as to eligibility for the subsidy. If unlimited quantities of the subsidized product were available at the reduced price, there would be little opportunity for a recipient of the subsidy to sell the food needed for his proper nutrition. These are but instances of the ways in which evasions can be held to a minimum while the program is simple. Perhaps these particular suggestions could not be followed for other reasons, but they illustrate the principle. Like the stricture to make the program simple, this tells the administrator what to avoid rather than what to do, but is important nonetheless.

There are probably other factors which should be considered. It will be noted that the existence of a surplus is not included as a reason for subsidized food consumption. If programs of subsidized food consumption get their political impetus from agricultural producers, the existence of surpluses may well be a controlling factor. The food stamp plan was designed to aid producers whose products were not included in direct subsidy payments to farmers, as well as to improve the diet of needy people. Since adequate diets can be achieved in more than one way, the relative abundance (and hence cost) of particular food products cannot be ignored. A program of subsidized food consumption undertaken for

the general public good should consider primarily the dietary needs of the group to be aided, rather than aim to relieve the production and income problems of farmers.

## VI

There are several possible ways in which food consumption might be subsidized. Only the major types of programs can be discussed here. Numerous variants could easily be devised and details would have to be worked out for each. Political, administrative, legal, sociological, and other aspects would require consideration. The major methods, their advantages and disadvantages, are as follows:

1. Food—all food or only selected kinds—could be made "free," in the sense that anyone could have as much as he would consume. Arrangements might be made so that people could go to a central point, such as a store or warehouse, and simply help themselves to what they needed. Some formality, such as placing orders with a clerk or arranging for delivery, would dignify the proceeding and probably restrict waste. If complete freedom of self-service for consumption at home was deemed undesirable, consumption at the place of delivery could be required. The program might be extended to all foods, but more probably would be restricted to protective and staple foods, and to mediocre qualities. Thus, whole milk might be free, and other commodities sold at regular prices, or boiling beef be free while T-bone steaks were sold. Serious difficulties would arise in giving away food of varying quality, since everyone would want the better grades and those forced to take the lower grades would be dissatisfied. Superior quality usually is not required for adequate nutrition. The places at which food was available should certainly be convenient to the low-income classes. If restricted to such locations, people from the higher-income groups would utilize them relatively little. The appearance of universal application would have been achieved, but the extent of the subsidy reduced.

A program of "free" food would scarcely eliminate the sale of food. If free food were limited to average or mediocre qualities, many persons would pay to obtain superior quality. If the places where the food was dispensed were inconveniently located for the more well-to-do classes, some would pay for food obtainable at a more convenient location or delivered to their home. If consumption on the spot was required, many

would prefer to pay for food in order to eat it at home. Yet the family whose income was inadequate to buy enough food could obtain it from one of the "free" sources. Free public schools and free public libraries have not made private schools and libraries extinct.

The advantages of such a plan are many. It would be extremely simple, with a minimum of restriction and administrative overhead. Evasions would be very difficult or impossible. If everyone could obtain what he needed by simply going to a specified place for it, his opportunity to sell rather than to consume it would be almost absent. There would be no problem of eligibility; those for whom the program was designed would obtain the desired benefit. Consumption of staple foods beyond the minimum adequate level would not be inhibited, although the cost of superior quality food would act as a bar against improvement in variety and grade of foods consumed.

Some disadvantages might be cited. Such a plan might not find social acceptance, particularly at first. Although it satisfies the criterion of availability to all, it involves such a large break with the past that many people would be unable to accept it. Undue stress should not be placed on this probable reaction, however. Free public schools were widely condemned, when first proposed and introduced, as revolutionary, socialistic, unethical, and violations of free private enterprise. Today, the conservative person, in opposing reform, often suggests more public education as the most respectable reform he can conceive. One major problem in "free" food would surely be waste, at least at first. Theft does not jeopardize our free public libraries, however. Social sanctions other than increased cost can be developed, in order to restrict or eliminate waste.

"Free" food would not insure nutritionally satisfactory diets for everyone. Many people would eat unwisely even if food were free. Educational and other programs must be adopted to deal with them.

2. All consumers might be given a gift of some amount of income which could be spent only for food, or for certain types of food. There are several devices whereby this could be accomplished. One of the simplest would be an extension or continuation of wartime food rationing. Consumers would register and obtain books with point values, as at present. These points could be exchanged for specified foods, probably only for staple foods of mediocre qualities. No money would be required

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A program of "free" food would scarcely eliminate the sale of food. If free food were limited to average or mediocre qualities, many persons would pay to obtain superior quality. If the places where the food was dispensed were inconveniently located for the more well-to-do classes, some would pay for food obtainable at a more convenient location or delivered to their home. If consumption on the spot was required, many

would prefer to pay for food in order to eat it at home. Yet the family whose income was inadequate to buy enough food could obtain it from one of the "free" sources. Free public schools and free public libraries have not made private schools and libraries extinct.

The advantages of such a plan are many. It would be extremely simple, with a minimum of restriction and administrative overhead. Evasions would be very difficult or impossible. If everyone could obtain what he needed by simply going to a specified place for it, his opportunity to sell rather than to consume it would be almost absent. There would be no problem of eligibility; those for whom the program was designed would obtain the desired benefit. Consumption of staple foods beyond the minimum adequate level would not be inhibited, although the cost of superior quality food would act as a bar against improvement in variety and grade of foods consumed.

Some disadvantages might be cited. Such a plan might not find social acceptance, particularly at first. Although it satisfies the criterion of availability to all, it involves such a large break with the past that many people would be unable to accept it. Undue stress should not be placed on this probable reaction, however. Free public schools were widely condemned, when first proposed and introduced, as revolutionary, socialistic, unethical, and violations of free private enterprise. Today, the conservative person, in opposing reform, often suggests more public education as the most respectable reform he can conceive. One major problem in "free" food would surely be waste, at least at first. Theft does not jeopardize our free public libraries, however. Social sanctions other than increased cost can be developed, in order to restrict or eliminate waste.

"Free" food would not insure nutritionally satisfactory diets for everyone. Many people would eat unwisely even if food were free. Educational and other programs must be adopted to deal with them.

2. All consumers might be given a gift of some amount of income which could be spent only for food, or for certain types of food. There are several devices whereby this could be accomplished. One of the simplest would be an extension or continuation of wartime food rationing. Consumers would register and obtain books with point values, as at present. These points could be exchanged for specified foods, probably only for staple foods of mediocre qualities. No money would be required

for these foods, payment being completed by use of the ration coupons. Purchase of other types and qualities of food would be permitted. This type of subsidized food consumption would have some advantages: food consumption would be guided or stimulated along desirable lines, so that people taking advantage of the program would tend to obtain a certain minimum adequate level of nutrition; the extent of the subsidy would be limited, since a limit would be placed on the kinds and amounts of foods so obtained; since the program would be open to all, universal applicability would be obtained; and evasion would not be easy or profitable. Wartime experience with food rationing and prewar experience with food stamps have familiarized the public with similar procedures, though perhaps not endeared them. There would be some offsetting disadvantages: the food obtained from the stamps would be free, whereas additional amounts would have to be paid for, hence tending to restrict consumption to the amount provided by the stamps; the mechanics of the plan probably would not be as simple as for a "free" food program; freedom of choice would probably be restricted more than in a "free" food program, and hence the same total quantities of food would yield a smaller sum total of satisfactions.

A variant of the method of giving income to consumers for food purchases would involve giving income inversely to the family's income from other sources. Thus, families with incomes of $5,000 or more might be given no assistance, but those with incomes of $600 or less might be given enough income to purchase all their food. This gift of income would take the form of stamps exchangeable for food, probably only for staple foods of average or mediocre qualities. Families with very low incomes would be given all the stamps they needed; families with higher incomes would be given fewer stamps or would be required to purchase them at a scale of prices based upon their income. Since these stamps could be used for a number of different foods, considerable freedom of choice would be retained. The cost of the program would be limited, and aid would be extended to those most in need of it. Several disadvantages would exist, however: the program of aid would be discriminatory and based on means tests, hence violating our principle of universal applicability; administration would be involved and the incentive for evasion would be considerable; foods obtainable with the stamps would be salable and hence there would be a tendency to violate the basic

purpose of the program; and quantities of food above the subsidized amounts would be relatively expensive, hence inhibiting consumption above that level. However, the fact that food beyond some minimum point cost at full price would tend to restrict waste.

Still other variants of this general plan could be devised, so that low-income people would receive grants of income earmarked for food purchase. Whatever system of aid to lower-income groups was adopted, the price system of the market would not be attacked directly in this type of subsidized food consumption.

3. Various forms of the two-price system could be devised, to make the price of food lower for one group than for another. The two-price system has been very common in American industry. A firm may manufacture one grade of product, selling part under one well-advertised brand and under conditions leading to a relative high price, and the remainder under another brand and at a lower price. Thus, automobile tires made by leading rubber companies are often sold under different brand names by the large mail-order companies at prices substantially below those for the same quality tire bearing the manufacturer's brand. The low-price market may be abroad; at one time it was possible to buy American-made sewing machines in Japan, ship them to this country over the tariff on them, and still obtain them at a lower price than the same machine which had never left these shores. The essence of a two-price system is some device for stratifying the market into one group that pays the higher price and one that pays the lower price. The basis of stratification need not be a means test, nor carry any social stigma. Advertising to impress high-income groups with alleged superiorities of a particular brand is the most common method of stratifying a market. Consumers are not fully aware of the extent of two-price systems in industry, and tend to regard such a system as an innovation when applied to food.

The food-stamp plan of the late 1930's was a two-price system applied to food. People in low-income groups were allowed to obtain certain foods free, on condition that they expend certain minimum sums for other foods. Thus, persons not eligible or not participating in the program paid the posted market price for the articles included in the plan, whereas participants obtained these commodities free. The divergence between the two prices was thus extreme, from full market price to zero. One serious disadvantage of this plan was its use of a means test and the

discrimination involved thereby. A substantial proportion of those eligible under the program refused to avail themselves of it. Freedom of choice was somewhat restricted and there was opportunity for fraud and evasion. In spite of these limitations, the program worked well and found wide popular acceptance. Food consumption by low-income groups was stimulated. The cheap or free foods were selected primarily on the basis of surpluses or desire to aid producers, but improved nutrition was obtained from them.

A two-price plan for food in the postwar period might follow the proven but somewhat imperfect lines of the food-stamp plan, or it might follow somewhat different lines. The social stigma of the means test might be avoided, for instance. Mention has been made of the possibility of establishing milk depots in the poorer residential districts, where grade B milk could be sold at a reduced price to all who came. This program would be open to all, but many families in the higher-income brackets would prefer to pay full price for grade A milk delivered to their door. This is but one device that might be used. The lower price, of the two-price system, might be zero as under the food-stamp plan, or it might simply be less than the higher price. The latter may be unaffected by the existence of the lower price, or may be increased by it, or decreased. The ramifications of the two-price system are too great to be discussed fully here.

Any program of subsidized food consumption may be carried on through the present privately operated system of food distribution, or through some governmentally operated system. Use of the present privately operated system would secure the political support of the food industry and retail trade groups. Popular support of the food-stamp plan arose largely because it used the established retail outlets. If the volume of subsidized food were not large, this might be cheaper than a separate system. If subsidized food consumption were extended to many foods and large groups, large economies could be achieved by use of a special government plan of distribution. Excess capacity in distribution facilities, overlapping and duplicating groups, wasteful competition, and some special or luxury services could be eliminated. Whole milk could be distributed from depots for less than half of delivery cost, for instance. There would be important political and economic problems to face in govern-

ment distribution schemes. Subsidized food consumption is separable from the form of food distribution.

In any discussion of subsidized food distribution, someone quickly raises the question, "Won't the cost be prohibitive?" The apparent cost will be equal to the cost of the extra food consumed, plus or minus differences in costs of distributing food. If the number of persons with inadequate diets is large, and if the program of subsidization is relatively generous, the apparent cost might be fairly large. As a guess, it is unlikely to exceed one quarter of the national food bill in the absence of subsidies, and probably would be far less. If the subsidies were relatively generous the food bills of many persons would be shifted to the government. The family with average income might pay as much more in taxes as it saved in food bills; the wealthy family, far more in taxes than saving in food bills; and the poor family, far less in taxes than saving in food cost. This would be a shift in burden, not an increase in total food cost.

The real cost of a program of food subsidies would be far less than the apparent cost, and would probably be less than nothing. The increased productivity of the adults who otherwise would have had an inadequate diet might easily more than offset the cost; and the benefit to the growing children would provide an added dividend, realizable over the longer run.

The only way to obtain a minimum adequate diet for all seems to be through subsidized food consumption. Various practical programs can be devised and carried out. Until they are, Freedom from Want will be a goal rather than a reality.

# LITERATURE TAKES TO THE WOODS

*By* FREEMAN CHAMPNEY

Most of the important American fiction of the last twenty years has been stridently contemporary. It has broken through literary conventions and provincial limitations of perception; it has chucked out the taboos of gentility and good taste and given the American scene an intensive going-over. It grew out of a period of sustained crisis and it reflects the individual frustrations and the erosion of social patterns characteristic of the time. Much of it is full of chaos and violence, and of the hysterically insistent nihilism of which only a deeply moralistic culture is capable.

As might be expected, the greater part of this recent writing deals directly with the storm centers boiling up where new forces impinge upon traditional attitudes and customs. It is in such areas as these—the effect of economic insecurity on the good old American belief that good people are successful people, the effect of industrialism on the sense of workmanship, the effect of modern urban life on individual security and community integration, the class struggle and the erosion of the family, and so on—that the socially significant pay dirt is to be found and that the writers stake their claims.

But there is a substantial body of recent American writing from which this absorption in contemporary life is absent—or which is concerned with little backwaters where the determining forces of present-day life have hardly touched. The list of fiction and semi-fiction published in the last twenty years which deals with frontier life and pre-industrial America is a long one. It includes such authors as Willa Cather, Vardis Fisher, O. E. Rolvaag, Walter D. Edmonds, Mari Sandoz, H. L. Davis, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Gladys Hasty Carroll, Paul D. Weaver, Conrad Richter, Jessie Stuart, and Le Grand Cannon.

Much of this writing has quality and depth and it has an important place in the maturing American culture. But it does raise interesting

questions. When a literate and perceptive contemporary undertakes to write about pre-industrial America, he cannot do so without forming attitudes and evaluations toward his material in its relation to the life of today. Whether consciously and verbally, or implicitly and intuitively, he draws up a chart which locates and relates past and present in terms of human value and motivation as well as of landscape and impedimenta. The same thing holds true if his characters are only accidentally contemporary—like the people of *Cross Creek*.

The historical fictionist has the advantage of perspective—of knowing how things turned out and of being able to tell the main trunk of growth from the branches. The Mormons who made the trek from Illinois to Great Salt Lake with Brigham Young thought of themselves as leaving the United States and its persecutions behind forever. Their conversion to the new religion had already separated them from "normal" Americans and their incredible pilgrimage seemed to them to insure their escape from the flag for all time. Today we can see the Mormon episode as a chapter in the settling of the West and as part of a chapter in the religious proliferation of the nineteenth century. It all fits into our picture of American growth with a neatness which simply didn't exist at the time it was happening.

On the other hand, no writer can be entirely sure that he is doing much more than talk to himself in the dark when he sets out to re-create the color, the flavor, and the feel of life in a period that has passed. Scholarly research and antiquarian sniffing around are all very well and necessary but there always remains a residue of guesswork and an aura of uncertainty. The more remote the period chosen is in time and in unlikeness to the world of the author, the greater is the chance that plausible improvisation (or a reliance on previous improvisation by other writers) will be the dominant method. Since the writer cannot verify with any certainty the motives and frames of reference of his characters, his work tends to reflect his own attitudes and personality. And since he is actually at work in the insistent present, and is himself its product, his attitude toward the past will be conditioned by his own adjustment to the present and his judgments about it. Because of this relativity of outlook, historical fiction often illuminates the world of its author as much as the world of its setting.

This recent literature of pre-industrial America, then, may be considered for its contribution to the understanding of our cultural background and it is worth looking at for the inferential light it sheds on present-day America.

II

There is abundant documentation—in print and in anyone's consciousness—that this is a time of intense insecurity: not only the special insecurities of war, but those arising out of the gap between technology and political understanding, out of spiritual rootlessness, and out of the loss by too many of us of what Peter Drucker calls "status and function." The cumulative effect of the spiritual letdown after the last war, the joyride of the '20's, and the frustrate misery of the depression has caused serious questioning of the directions in which America was going. Nor have any of the suggested solutions of our crisis status been such as to win common acceptance and allow people in general to take a breath and clear the decks for action. When an individual faces a situation which seems beyond his power to handle successfully he is apt to retreat to infantile habits of behavior—the psychiatrists call it regression. The same thing can happen to writers. When they are baffled or repelled by contemporary life they may find comfort in working with material sufficiently remote in time to be easily glamorized and sufficiently unlike the rejected present to seem idyllic.

Several highly successful books of the past few years have made use of pre-industrial America in ways which seem directly conditioned by the state of the contemporary soul. They come close to their characters and to the living moment of interaction between people and land, tools, weather, animals, and other people. They aim at a pervading flavor of wholeness and serenity. In books like Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' *The Yearling,* the woods knowhow and the deep spiritual wisdom of Penny Baxter are utterly removed from Main Street and Metropolis alike, and yet they probably couldn't have been written of in quite the same perspective at any other period than the present. They respond to a starved need in the modern world. In Conrad Richter's *The Trees* and Le Grand Cannon's *Look to the Mountain* we have stories of frontier life which focus sharply on the personal, the tangible, and their spiritual sufficiency. In Gladys Hasty Carroll's *As the Earth Turns* the stability and integrity

of New England farm life is pictured as an enduring base which sustains the restless comings and goings of modern existence and is not only superior to it but inferentially has greater survival value.

There have been many other books of this general orientation in the last few years. To a certain extent they may be considered, as suggested above, as a sort of literary regression. But a less rigorously smug attitude would accept them as a legitimate and badly needed contribution to the question of how the human animal can survive in his modern world. The experience of the past few generations has indicated pretty strongly that man is not indefinitely malleable and adaptable but, on the contrary, has certain basic nonmaterial needs which cannot be thwarted without disastrous results. That many of these needs have been thwarted for many people in recent years is also obvious. It isn't necessary to fall into fantasies of a lost golden age to admit that some aspects of life in pre-industrial America had values that are currently much more difficult to come at.

Family life had the strongest sort of functional economic and social bases. Religion, of a personal and non-intellectualized sort, was a sustaining and integrating force in the common life. The overspecialization of modern business and industry had not eaten into the competence and self-respect which go with the possession of useful manual skills (see Thoreau: "As many trades as I have fingers"). Workmanship involved doing whole jobs and not the infuriating routine fragments made necessary by an intricate division of labor. "Status and function" were so taken for granted that it hadn't been necessary to coin definitive phrases for them. It is easy to go to extremes and to sentimentalize the vanishing values of our recent past. We ought to reread Hamlin Garland and E. H. Howe any time we forget to what extent the human spirit was hemmed in by poverty and provincialism—however much it escaped the curses of meaningless leisure, uselessness, and spiritual drift. But we now have the means for doing away with the poverty and the provincialism. We also need to see about rediscovering some of the values.

One blind alley—both literary and actual—should be noted in the tendency to look to the American background for wisdom for the present. That is the making of a creed out of actual environmental regression—the flight from the machine and the city, not as simple personal preference, but as a universal solution for the ills of modern life. We can see wholeness and dignity (sometimes, and with qualifications) in the lives

of our fathers or grandfathers or great uncles. But for the contemporary American to try to achieve similar wholeness and dignity by reverting to the occupation and trying to duplicate the environment of such father, grandfather, or great uncle is silly and impossible. What we *can* do is to take ourselves a good look at the qualities of wholeness and dignity themselves and aim at twentieth-century conditions which will foster them.

The most blatant example of this attempt at pure regression, seriously set forth by a reputable writer, is in Gladys Hasty Carroll's *Neighbor to the Sky*. Her hero, a carpenter lad of simplicity and integrity, is swindled, baffled, and corrupted by the middle-class intellectual level of existence that his neurotic wife goads him into achieving. After much agony all around he finally chucks the whole thing and goes back to the family farm and his work bench—and the implication is that both he and the neurotic wife have thus found the one true path to salvation.

In a book which deals with somewhat the same question (*Wind Before Rain*, an excellent first novel by Paul D. Weaver) but does a much superior job of it, the destructive impact of the spreading wage-economy on back-country people is brilliantly set forth. In this story of the Virginia hills, the solid and admirable characters stick to their land and resist the lure of "cash-money." The apostles of progress are the greedy, the slick, and the meanly cunning. There is no sentimental regression in Weaver's book, however. His hero is doomed to lose his battle against the towns and the factories. That he dies in a climactic gun fight (rather than suffering the slow attrition of his wife's longing for a nice house and pretty clothes, and his talented younger brother's defection from the family acres) is a legitimate means of bringing the book to a dramatic ending but it doesn't obscure the inevitability of his defeat.

It should be remembered that the American public as a whole very seldom reads current books. Except for an occasional *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *Gone With the Wind,* probably not more than four per cent of the population read the leading best sellers. And it is pretty much the same four per cent for each new book which gladdens the heart of its publisher. Further, this book-reading public is predominantly the educated, professional, and middle-class part of the population, and most of the authors come from the same group. It is reasonable to be a little skeptical about the universality of the diagnoses of American life which come from

such a relatively small and inbred group. There is undoubtedly a tendency on the part of the literary group—writers and readers alike—to project the special maladies of white-collar workers and middle-class housewives onto the whole of American culture or, for that matter, onto Western Civilization. But there is no point in carrying this skepticism farther than a moderate adjustment of perspective. The book-reading public is not representative, but it is unusually subject to, aware of, and articulate about the salient features of modern life in their effect on the individual personality. The literary nostalgia for strenuous simplicity does not mean that Americans in general are ready to trade in their V-8's for ox-carts. But it does indicate a groping hunger of some importance.

III

We have a healthy number of fictional treatments of the American past which are adequate and unpretentious. Books of this type are largely innocent of profundity or direct contemporary significance. As might be expected, they tend to center on the colorful life which sprang up around a particular region or special trade. The Oklahoma frontier, the gold fields, the Comstock Lode, the explorers and Indian fighters, the outlaws, and the canalboaters are obvious examples. These writers are looking for color and adventure. They combine the telling of a good, rousing yarn with interpolated data on life and language and customs.

One outstanding difference separates this type of novel from the more solid stories of the settling of the West. The homesteaders were aiming to stay, and their story involves the struggle to create civilized community life as well as to make a living. Churches, schools, roads, and governments had to be built, as well as farms, houses and barns. Consequently, the frontier epic is at least partly a study in social integration. The non-epic, on the other hand, is usually a story of floaters, prospectors, boomers, and adventurers—the footloose and the assorted riff-raff of boom towns and precarious callings. It seeks for color, danger, violence, and the picturesque. The epic is concerned with more long-term ends and the sinking of roots; it has a greater follow-through for the growth of American culture.

In such books as Walter D. Edmonds' *Rome Haul* and *Chad Hanna*, in the novels of Kenneth Roberts, in Edna Ferber's *Cimmaron*, or in Vardis Fisher's *City of Illusion* we get vivid accounts of closed chapters

of the American past. When the verifiable stage properties of such books are accurately drawn, as they usually are, any judgment as to their total honesty is necessarily precarious and subjective. It seems likely, though, that the factor of contemporary authorship for a contemporary audience introduces a considerable, if subtle, slanting of the material. Violence and riproaring adventure are apt to be exaggerated and romanticized for the delight of a white-collar public. Religion and the unspectacular virtues are often played down or burlesqued, and sexual unorthodoxies accented—all through the conscious or unconscious application of a modern urbanized sophistication to the data.

American civilization is notoriously characterized by social fluidity, mobility, looseness of family ties, and a dynamic restlessness. Margaret Mead has commented on the way these phenomena and the "home town" overcompensations that go with them appear to the European or to the denationalized eye of the anthropologist. There are also compensations and overcompensations in contemporary literature. Increasing numbers of people are outgrowing the stage at which their need for social roots could be appeased by the provincialisms of home town consciousness and indiscriminate "joining." As Alfred Kazin points out in *On Native Grounds*, the past few years have seen a tremendous increase in preoccupation with the American Scene. Photographs, documentary films, W.P.A. guidebooks, regional novels and regional history, and national antiquarianism have had an enormous vogue. All of this indicates a growing national maturity and a spreading conception of American culture as an organic entity having sources and continuities. There has been a rush to record aspects of our past which are slipping beyond recall.

Something more than picturesque history and rummaging in attics, however, is necessary if this new awareness of our past is to be useful. One of the commonest types of book manuscripts fruitlessly making the rounds of the publishers in recent years has been the autobiographical or semi-fictional accounts of pioneer and homesteading, or Civil War experience. There must be several hundred of these chunks of barely literate Americana. Often they contain a great potential wealth of color and anecdote, and usually they give a feeling of sharp authenticity (which is sometimes lacking in their successfully published counterparts). The major—and usually insuperable—shortcoming of these manuscripts is not a matter of literary polish but of perspective and understanding on the part of the

author. They are apt to consist of bare narration, without form, individual motivation, or integration—either internal integration or integration with the larger framework of national development. They have the raw stuff of experience in abundance but without any of the assimilation and transmutation which might give it life and meaning.

Essentially, they fail in understanding the past because they don't understand the present. They are weighted down with a story of hardships suffered, prodigious labors accomplished, and homes and communities built. But the material is unrelated to any larger structure and there is little for the present-day reader to get his teeth into. In most cases the writing of these manuscripts has been a tremendous task (almost as staggering, in the unfamiliarity of working with words and the sheer loneliness of the job, as the pioneering deeds they chronicle). That they persevere—not only in the writing itself, but in the face of unanimous publishers' regrets—is indication of the strength of the recent American awakening to its past. It indicates too that that maxim dear to the academic mind ("No man is truly educated who is a creature of his own time only") needs revision. No man, it would seem, who is unaware of the nature of his own time is able to assimilate the past.

## IV

It is easy nowadays to forget that the "American Dream" of a few generations back was largely an agrarian one. The spirit of liberty and self-reliance which was something new in the world was rooted in the abundant land of the West and not in collective bargaining. Jefferson's vision of a democracy of sturdy freeholders was not merely colonial wishfulness but something that came close to reality in the lives of thousands of frontiersmen and homesteaders. Until around the turn of the last century, the insurgent vigor of American democracy had its base in the people of the soil.

The literature of this phase of pioneering is a rich and many-sided one. There were several intertwined stories to be told: of the struggle of the pioneers with drought, grasshoppers, tornadoes, blizzards, and the land itself; of the slow assimilation of the various immigrant groups and their cultures; of the building of community life. Willa Cather's prairie novels—*My Antonia* and *O Pioneers!*—and O.E. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth* deal with this material admirably. The story of fortitude

and triumph in the long, uphill fight against extinction, and of the carving of order and plenty out of a howling wilderness is stirring and dramatic enough to give life to the blurb-weary word "epic." It is also a story which derives its heroic qualities from the long view and the large view—the emerging civilized countryside and the people as a whole—and which can easily be over-romanticized. An unsentimental account of an individual pioneer (such as Mari Sandoz' *Old Jules*) is apt to show the ruthlessness, the cruelty, and the human waste and wreckage which were also a part of the picture.

With the closing of the frontier, the vitality began to ooze out of the agrarian democracy. The children of the pioneers inherited settled regions where the fierce heroism of making something out of virgin forest or prairie was receding into legend and where the pervasive realities of everyday life were increasingly those of drudgery, insecurity, provincialism, and the unequal struggle with the railroads, the banks, and the growing soulless corporations which controlled markets and fixed the prices of farm machinery. Freedom, opportunity, and adventure (or the reasonably accurate facsimiles thereof) were moving to the cities and a process of slow decay and frustration began to erode the people of the soil. Technology and capitalism were creating new conditions of life and new battlegrounds for democracy. We are only now approaching a clear alignment of forces in this new struggle for the realization of the American Dream.

Of the American writers who found their raw material in the settling of the West and who have given us its epics, none has made the jump to an adequate handling of today's social and spiritual frontiers. Hamlin Garland, in his Middle-Border stories and autobiographical books (*Main-Travelled Roads, A Son of the Middle-Border, A Daughter of the Middle-Border*) recorded the dusty-throated defeat of the second-generation pioneers. A romantic and sentimental soul by nature, he escaped to the city, trifled with bohemianism and agrarian reform, and settled into a writing career which was almost wholly divided between somber reminiscence and the romanticizing of the mountain country of the West and the Noble Red Man. He was in uneasy transition from farm to city and he never made a secure place for himself in either.

In the work of Willa Cather, who followed Garland in time but wrote of his generation, we can see vividly how the libertarian afflatus

of the soil, blocked and defeated by the rise of the cities, has turned escapist or reactionary. For all of the sweat and grime that went with them, the pioneering virtues were aristocratic. Independence and self-sufficiency headed the list and elbow room was of the essence. The pioneers were out to make themselves quarter section kings, secure in their created wealth and omnipotent over their own domains. It was a healthy aristocracy because it was based (largely) on personal courage, resourcefulness, and perseverance rather than on exploitation or privilege. It was an admirable combination of qualities for its own kind of a world. It was a very different kettle of fish when these qualities tangled with the twentieth-century world of industrialism, finance capitalism, and power politics.

In such a controlling framework the pioneer virtues tend either toward the grasping, ruthless getting-ahead of the farmer-capitalist or the hate-ridden provincialism and conservatism of the small farmer on the constant verge of failure. Among writers who have their spiritual capital tied up in the pioneering virtues, the *Massenmensch* of the cities is an appalling phenomenon, and the status of the erstwhile pioneers doesn't make for pleasant contemplation either. A frequent resultant of these unpleasant forces is the warping of the writer's work toward an increasingly remote past. Another is the spiritual attraction for such a writer of the moral rigidity and static dignity of authoritarian religion. Both of these tendencies are obvious in Willa Cather's progression from her prairie novels to the austerity and remoteness of *Death Comes to the Archbishop* and *Shadow on the Rock*.

One of the major confusions in present-day thought is that many of the farmers and small town dwellers who hate the New Deal and foam at the mouth over "planning" and "bureaucracy" do so from a sincere conviction that they are fighting the good American fight for liberty. To them, the application of collective controls—no matter how necessary or in the public interest—to economic life is totalitarianism and tyranny, and the New Deal and all its works are the antithesis of democracy. What these people are doing is applying their agrarian-libertarian concepts and judgments to a predominantly industrial-capitalist society in which these concepts and judgments have lost much of their relevance. That this group is being egged on and used by a minority which has no illusions about the democracy of its objectives does not alter the tragic

fact that the drive of the American Dream has been turned back upon itself. The purveyors of reaction and fascism are making shrewd use of this gap between nineteenth- and twentieth-century liberalism. The literature of the settling of the West vividly illustrates the origins of this gap and the subsequent ideological history of some of its authors shows how difficult the crossing of it has been.

## V

Since the beginning of the war, American writers have moved steadily toward an acceptance of their native culture and people as not only "worth fighting for" but capable of being honestly celebrated in literature. The trend has been away from what Kazin refers to as the American writer's "deep and subtle alienation" from his own country. Whether this trend can survive the armistice will depend on whether the upheaval and stirring of the present can be carried through to a new implementation of the American Dream in terms of an age of technology and air power.

Our national background can be a source of strength and inspiration if we can establish continuities between it and today's frontiers. The homesteader and the frontiersman were after freedom from tyranny, sufficiency of material things, and self-respect and dignity. We need not settle for less today. But our days of journeying into the sunset are over and the fruits no longer come from the good earth alone.

# PROBLEMS OF THE PEACE: II. THE FARMERS

*By* LEWIS COREY

FARMERS will enter the postwar period not much better prepared than they were before to solve their problems. They are, it is true, in a better financial position; their money income, according to Department of Agriculture figures, has risen threefold from $5,000,000,000 in 1940 to $14,000,000,000 in 1943, and they have paid off about two-sevenths of their $7,000,000,000 mortgage debt; but deflation might change the picture. Farmers have not gone beyond the old "price politics" that have definitely proved of limited value, while the upper-crust farmers have made the situation worse by working with monopoly big business. In the postwar period the farmers will again be confronted with the old problems that have bedeviled them—the problems of disposal of surpluses in foreign markets, of the encroachment of large-scale farms on smaller independent farms, of the chemurgic drive to make agriculture supply more and more of the raw materials of industry that may bring farming under corporate control. Finally, farmers will be confronted with the issue of basic social change for economic balance, of what to work for and with whom, since farm problems tie in with the larger social-economic issue and cannot be solved alone.

### *The Problem of Foreign Markets*

The early postwar period will very likely be a prosperous one for farmers, owing to large foreign demand for their products. Dangers may arise from deflation following upon inflation of prices and land values. The situation is not yet acute; but there is farm pressure for higher prices, and already an increase in the buying and selling of farms at prices up, in most cases, by one-third. If this keeps on the inevitable deflation will come, as in 1920-21 after World War I.

As the dangers of the early postwar period are overcome the farmers will bump into their old problem again—what to do with the surpluses?

For several years Europe and Asia will call for American food, but then their own agriculture will resume production and demand will contract. This was the story after World War I. Moreover, the surpluses may be much larger than they were, because of the tremendous increase in farm output during the war. What then? The farmers will again be urged to depend on exports. Indeed, a propaganda is already going on to convince business, farmers and labor that American prosperity after the war will depend upon huge foreign markets (and huge foreign investments). Farmers may again waste their energy and money, as they did in the 1920's, on the illusion that exports mean salvation.

The downward trend of American food exports was only temporarily reversed by World War I. Europe's postwar demand for American food dropped, and the Continent began more intensive production of foodstuffs. At the same time agricultural exports from Latin America, Canada, and Australia gave increasingly active competition to American exports. The proportion of farm income derived from exports dropped from 19 per cent in 1919 to 12 per cent ten years later.[1] Yet farm policy looked to foreign markets for relief, instead of to agricultural readjustment and the increase of food consumption at home. During 1921-24 government aid in the form of large loans was given to stimulate farm exports, but the agricultural crisis was not ended. For ten years the farmers backed the McNary-Haugen movement for subsidizing exports on a grand systematic scale. Although Coolidge vetoed the Export Debenture plan, approval would simply have meant continuing on a false trail.

Income from foreign markets almost dried up during the depression of the 1930's. While farm exports shrank only slightly in volume the price shrinkage of more than 50 per cent was disastrous (more than in the case of nonagricultural exports). Tariffs, including our own, went up all over the world. Nations everywhere intensified efforts to increase agricultural production. France and its North African colonies became self-sufficient in food. Germany and Italy lessened their dependence upon food imports. Britain increased its food output by one-sixth from 1930-31 to 1936-37,[2] and the output has gone up still more during the war; in

[1]Henry C. Taylor and Anne Dewees Taylor, *World Trade in Agricultural Products* (1943), p. 243.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 249.

addition, Britain will undoubtedly increase its postwar imports of food from the Commonwealth nations. Foreign markets for American surpluses will continue to shrink.

The historical fact that American agriculture grew and prospered with expansion of the world market produced a fixation on foreign markets. But times change. One authority thus sums up the situation:

> Farmers have long relied upon the foreign market to drain off excess stocks or surplus production. But the export market has been disappointing since the close of the World War (1919). *Over the long run there seems to be a continuing downward trend of American agricultural exports* that was only temporarily interrupted by the World War, and there is nothing to indicate a reversal of this trend following the current war.[3]

Prewar regulation and planning of agriculture was distorted by economic nationalism, imperialism, and fascism. But so were *all* kinds of planning distorted by reaction. There is an imperative urge for progressive planning, national and international, to bring greater economic balance throughout the world. Industrial nations will increase their agricultural production, while backward nations will industrialize on a large scale. The political determination of backward nations to break their economic dependence on the great industrial powers is reinforced by the new technology of electricity, light metals and synthetics and plastics, which makes industrialization feasible in all the world's regions where the old technology of steam power, with its reliance on comparatively scarce coal and iron, limited industrialization to a few favored regions. Part of the process of industrialization will be a modernization of agriculture and resulting large output. It may be that at the beginning the backward nations will export more agricultural goods to get capital goods for industrialization; they may develop farm surpluses to compete with American surpluses; and for us to fight them for foreign markets would be an invitation to war. Eventually, larger agricultural output will be absorbed by rising living standards, more intensive industrialization, and perhaps population growth. Many basic economic changes will become inevitable:

> The far-reaching changes in world trade in agricultural products implicit in an increasing industrialization of agricultural countries foreshadows serious

[3]Orvis V. Welles, "Planning and Agricultural Adjustment," in *Planning for America*, edited by George B. Galloway (1941), pp. 235-36.

> and highly complex problems for those already highly industrial nations whose whole economy is geared to the outward flow of manufactured or processed goods or of mineral products and the inward flow of the products of agriculture. Will it mean for them a return to a more even balance between their industry and their agriculture? Will it imply a reduction in their industrial populations to correspond to the growing industrial populations in the agricultural countries? Will it result in the migration of skilled workmen to countries that are in process of industrialization? Will political considerations and ambitions promote or impede such a reorganization of the economic structure of the world?[4]

Dependence of highly industrial nations on large food imports is a result of capitalist national-imperial forces that frustrate economic progress. It arises out of overindustrialization and overpopulation, which call for cheap food from the exploitation of colonial peoples. It means a greater realization of capitalist profit than is realizable from a cultivation of the home market to raise living standards. It brings an unbalanced economy with the sacrifice (almost destruction, as in Britain) of agriculture. The final upshot is imperialism and war; and, in the world today, fascism.

But the problem of farm surpluses is easily solvable in a progressive fashion. It calls for three basic measures:

1. More diversification of agriculture. One-crop farming is disastrous; it has strangled the South where cotton, a greedy devourer of the soil's fertility, has transformed much rich land into desert wastes. Already diversification is going on in the South in a small way, and desert wastes bloom again through diversified production of livestock and leguminous crops that replenish the soil.

2. More production of a greater variety of foodstuffs. The majority of the American people still do not eat enough nor do they eat a sufficient variety of foods. A greater market awaits diversified farming if the reliance is on American purchasing power.

3. The greater use of surpluses—including wheat, cotton, corn—for transformation into synthetics and plastics. Chemurgy, under progressive guidance, can absorb the surpluses and still greater farm production. If its working is not distorted by monopoly corporate control, chemurgy can bring salvation to agriculture.

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[4]Taylor and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-77.

What this means is more intensive and rational cultivation of the American market. The policy of "huge foreign markets and huge foreign investment" to bring American prosperity drives toward imperialism and war. There can be no world cooperation for economic progress and peace if the big industrial nations insist on *forcing* foreign trade on the basis of economic nationalism and imperialism, against the need for "a reorganization of the economic structure of the world." We must gear our foreign trade policy to changing economic facts and the world's desire for industrialization and economic balance.

### *The Agricultural Revolution and Farm Policy*

While a solution of the surpluses problem is feasible, it may come in a form destructive of independent farming. The danger arises from the chemurgical phase of the agricultural revolution, the increasing industrial utilization of farm products that may bring monopoly corporate control of agriculture. There are three phases of the agricultural revolution now going on:

1. The mechanization of agriculture, which, since the invention of the internal combustion engine, has enormously speeded up the use of machines on farms. One farm operation after another, including "stoop labor," is being mechanized. From the all-purpose tractor to the mechanical cotton picker the number of agricultural machines has swiftly grown. This means constantly smaller man-hours needed for the production of a particular output. The use of electricity—already at work in milking and separating milk, washing vegetables, refrigeration—promises still further reduction in labor requirements.

2. The yields per acre are constantly rising, and this is even more important than mechanization.. For mechanization does not increase the output of a given amount of land. This is being accomplished by the agrobiological phases of the agricultural revolution. Acre-crop yields are being stepped up by greater use of chemistry and the use of more and better fertilizers; by the improvement of soils and their more efficient utilization; by the selection and hybridization of seed; by the improvement of plants and plant breeding for greater fertility and resistance to disease, greater nutritional value; by the use of electricity beyond its mechanical drive to using electricity in the process of growth itself, speed-

ing up growth (e.g., heating incubators and brooders, heating hotbeds on garden farms). Resulting increases in acre-crop yield are frequently amazing. According to Professor R. D. Lewis, agronomist of Ohio State University, acre-crop yields of the soybean jumped from an average of 12.8 bushels in 1923-24 to 20.8 bushels in 1941-43, mainly through improvement of varieties by hybridization and better cultural methods; the use of hybrid corn seed brings an increase of 40 per cent up in acre-crop yields; 50 per cent greater yields come from a new strain of spring wheat. The increase of agrobiological knowledge will bring still greater increases in acre-crop yields.

3. As agricultural yields move up, the demand of industry for larger amounts of farm products to transform into chemicals, synthetics, and plastics also moves up. Almost any farm crop can be used to make chemicals, synthetics, and plastics, and the range of these new materials is already great—alcohol, rubber, synthetic cotton and wool, paper, wallboards for prefabricated houses, materials softer than silk and harder than steel. One source of the new materials are the 1,000,000,000 tons of farm wastes—oat hulls, sugar cane, wheat straw—that pile up every year on the farms; from these wastes more than 100 products are now being made, including paper, chemicals, alcohol, guncotton, charcoal, soap. The increasing industrial utilization of farm products can be met without sacrificing food production because of the constantly rising acre-crop yields. And it may well call for the expansion of agriculture rather than its contraction.

The agricultural revolution is full of promise. It means abundance; greater output with smaller amounts of labor, hence more leisure; the chance for nations and regions with a scarcity or no materials of the old type to offset the deficiency, in large measure, by the use of synthetic and plastic substitutes.

But the agricultural revolution goes on within the old capitalist and imperialist relations. The great industrialist nations may try to prevent the world's more equal industrialization. Within our own country the agricultural revolution may end up with the destruction of free farming. From 1910 to 1930 there was a 40 per cent increase in farm productivity (about the same as the increase of productivity in manufacturing, accompanied by a drop in the number of people working on farms from

10,000,000 to 9,000,000. At the same time the number of tenants rose, while tens of thousands of tenants and farm laborers were displaced to become migratory workers. And the danger of free farmers by the growth of large-scale, factory, corporate farming grew at an alarming rate.

A recent article by Carey McWilliams in *The Antioch Review* graphically sums up the situation. The family farm is in danger of destruction. "Tenancy has increased from 25 per cent of all farms in 1880 to 42 per cent in 1935." Mortgage debts grow. Migratory labor multiplies. "It is no longer necessary to maintain the hired hand throughout the year so that he will be available when needed. Increased use of migratory labor, paid on piece rates or an hourly basis . . . makes it possible to raise bulk crops on large mechanized estates." Absentee ownership of farms is growing because they can be operated by farm management corporations, while lending institutions open their own land-operating divisions.

> The effects of mechanization are many and varied. It makes for the consolidation of farm units; it increases the capital investment required for successful farming; it gives a decided advantage to the large-scale farm. . . . The facts about large-scale farming are: the medium-sized farmers are decreasing in number; the extremely small farms are increasing in number; and the large-scale farms are increasing both in number, size and value of products grown. . . . Mere increase in the size of farm holdings does not tell half the story. Concentration of control in farm operations may be effected by any number of devices: through leases, crop purchase agreements, multiple farm operations and similar methods, [among them] the industrial or trading corporation which comes to engage in farming operations as a means of providing its own raw materials.

Citing figures that one-half of the farms in 1929 produced 89 per cent of the total agricultural output, McWilliams quotes one observer who concludes that "the less productive half of our farms are not needed to feed and clothe the non-farm people—at least on present levels of consumption." New developments intensify the trend.

> Now chemurgy promises to convert the farm into a factory for the manufacture of industrial compounds. . . . The door which chemurgy opens is a door for industry, not for agriculture. The chemical farm of the future will most likely be integrated with the particular chemical or industrial plant to which it feeds raw materials. . . . The monopolistic structure of industry stimulates "big business" in agriculture. It is likely to be paralleled by the rise of food trusts in

which the production and the processing of food products are thoroughly integrated.

It is a terrifying picture. The 1940 census makes the picture darker; the number of farms of 1,000-or-more acres rose from 50,100 in 1910 to 100,500 in 1940, while their acreage scored a greater increase, from 167,000 to 364,000. McWilliams' final point must be emphasized: the chemurgic drive—an increasing use of farm products for the production of chemicals, synthetics and plastics—may bring American agriculture under final, disastrous monopoly control. But the conclusion is false that the destruction of free independent farming is inevitable. There are other forces at work that can be mobilized to prevent the destruction.

The perspective of an *inevitable* destruction of free independent farming offers no hope to the farmers except the "hope" of a future violent revolution and the collectivization of agriculture. This prospect provides no basis for action now, nor can it rally farmers to a radical progressive movement. If there were no way out, a way would have to be invented. But there is a way out. Carey McWilliams' picture is altogether too one-sided. The doom *may* come. But it need not come, and this conclusion appears clearly from an analysis of all the forces at work.

*One major strength of the large-scale factory farm—the exploitation of low-paid farm labor—can be destroyed, for it is undesirable and has nothing to do with technical-economic efficiency.* Assume that twenty-five farmers operate twenty-five independent farms, and that they each expect a minimum net income of $1,000 yearly. If these independent units are consolidated into a factory farm the hired workers are paid, say, $300 a year. The financial advantage flowing from exploitation is obvious, and the community costs of underpaid labor is an indirect subsidy to factory farms. It is also obviously undesirable since it means conversion of free American farmers into landless peasants. The way out is simple: organized struggle against factory farms; legislation (which already exists in several states) to outlaw corporate farming and the various devices by means of which financial power brings concentration of agricultural operations; use of all means to strengthen independent farms.

*While it is true that technology has favored large-scale agriculture, the technological factor is, by and large, less important than the financial, and the general trend in recent years has been to favor the family farm.*

For example, the tractor of the 1900's was heavy, expensive, built for one use only, and its operation was profitable only on farms of large size. But the "baby tractor" is small and lighter, of high speed, and its all-purpose feature makes it available for many uses; the cost is comparatively low and is within the reach of small farms. Using light metals in its construction will still further lower the "baby tractor's" cost. This is also true of the combine, which has become less costly and more efficient. According to one authoritative study, "many of the smaller units, as in the case of tractors and combines, are high in efficiency relative to larger units."[5] Another authoritative source concludes: "The recent trend of technological development appears to have been in a direction that favors family farms."[6] This trend calls for "increasing attention . . . the development of machines and techniques that will extend the benefits of technology to the farm or to the small farm operating unit. It seems that engineering research could be pointed toward the development of farm-home or small-scale equipment as well as toward the hunt for large-scale equipment."[7] The newer technology provides a tremendous weapon in the struggle against the agricultural concentration of factory farms. There are creative possibilities in the conscious, planned development of technology for smaller farms. (In general, the newer technology in industry also favors smaller units and decentralization.) Already, in a small way, there is technological planning for the family farm. T.V.A. has developed several machines streamlined to the small farmers' needs, after studying what those needs are. While in South Carolina two years ago I learned an interesting story; small cotton farmers complained that a big, expensive combination plougher-and-seeder was usable only on big plantations; the State Agricultural College in cooperation with agronomists of the federal Department of Agriculture developed a machine that was not only cheaper than the big machine but was more efficient with lower operating

[5]National Resources Committee, *Technological Trends and National Policy* (1938), p. 241.

[6]Declaration on policy adopted at a Conference on Postwar Program (July, 1943), sponsored by the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics; cited by Russell Smith, legislative representative of the National Farmers Union, in a memorandum to the Cooley Committee of Congress (December, 1943).

[7]Oris V. Welles, in Galloway, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

costs. Finally, where machinery is still too big and expensive for one-farm use the farmers can buy and use it by means of cooperatives.

*Technology has multiplied the capital costs of farming, but the trend is now toward relative lowering of these costs.* For the newer technology is capital-saving as well as labor-saving. In industry the costs of machines tend to go down as their efficiency goes up; the electric eye is on the way toward displacing 1,000,000 workers in manufactures, one-eighth of the total labor force, who do the monotonous, mechanical work of sorting, rejecting, etc. This trend is only beginning in agriculture. But the new technology can increasingly bring down capital costs in farming,[8] especially if there is a purposive, organized planning toward that end.

*Small farms are also being favored by agrobiological science, with its greater acre-crop yields from increasing fertility.* For these greater yields do not depend upon the amount of land in a farm—they come from more efficient utilization of soil, from better fertilizer, from improved seeds, plants, and plant breeding. The hybrid soybean seed that today grows twice as many bushels to the acre as in 1923 will grow them regardless of whether it is planted on a farm of 150 acres or a farm of 1,500 acres.

*The steady increase in farm tenancy has been reversed; tenancy decreased, according to census figures, from 42.1 per cent in 1935 to 38.7 per cent in 1940.* This reversal may be temporary, but it need not be if we do not want it to be. Much of the decrease in tenancy was due to the efforts of the Farm Security Administration, and these constructive efforts can be multiplied. An astonishing increase in output for the market (while producing more food for their own tables) has been registered during the war by rehabilitation borrowers, who in 1942-43 exceeded government war-output goals. They planned their farming with F.S.A. supervision and loans, resulting in elimination of unwise practices and general improvement of farming methods. The gains could have been greater if the assistance had been greater.

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[8]Technology can bring down capital costs in other directions. Conventional farm buildings need so much capital that few farmers can hope to carry the debt. But already architects and industry are giving an answer; lower capital costs by means of prefabrication and unconventional buildings that need to last 100 years. Another part of the answer are lower credit terms and the use of cooperatives.

A policy to save free farming can utilize other forces and measures. . . . New techniques (dehydration, quick freezing, oil expressing) permit the farmer to increase his income by preparing meat, vegetables, and poultry for the market; this can be done by individual farmers or through local cooperatives. . . . Government assistance and cooperatives can be used to consolidate too-small farms into larger family units or cooperative farms. . . . Further easing of credit for family farmers, with lower interest rates, should be supplemented by longer amortization periods with repayment terms flexible enough to allow for price fluctuations and bad crop years. . . . All tested measures of farm aid should be continued on a larger scale, including an integrated program of soil conservation, erosion control, reforestation and irrigation. . . . The Farmers Union proposal for an R.F.C. for family farmers should be accepted. . . . Farmers, cooperatives, and government should get together to formulate a farm building program. . . . The trend toward decentralization of industry should be directed to encourage small local industries attached directly to farming. . . . It is no longer valid to argue that one-half of American farmers are unnecessary because the other one-half produce 85 per cent of the output, and could produce it all; growing more food for nutritional diets and more crops for chemurgical industry will mean an expansion of agriculture, not its contraction. . . . The dangers of agricultural concentration from chemurgy can be overcome by legal prohibition of corporate factory farms, by organization of chemurgical supply through independent farmers, by encouragement of cooperative farms that may combine with chemurgical plants. . . . In general, any progressive advantages of large-scale farming can be broken down into their components and made available to free farmers by cooperatives.

### *Farmers and Larger Social Action*

The dangers of chemurgy are the dangers of monopoly. It threatens not only agricultural concentration but a greater monopoly control of industry. Monopoly corporations in the chemical industries (e.g., Standard Oil, DuPont) are using patents to control the development of synthetics and plastics. Other monopoly corporations are breaking into the new field; United States Steel has just bought a "substantial interest" in a housing corporation, either to force the use of steel or to control prefabrication from plastics.

The democratic future of American agriculture calls for a three-point program for which militant progressive farmers must fight:

1. A balance within agriculture, which involves free independent ownership, supplemented by cooperatives and planning; destruction of the forces driving toward agricultural concentration; break-up of factory farms.

2. A balance between agriculture and industry, which involves increase of the purchasing power of farm prices; end of monopoly industrial domination of industry; more regional economic balance through greater regional industrialization.

3. A balance in the economy as a whole, which involves the end of cyclical fluctuations and depressions; increasing purchasing power to sustain an increasing agricultural demand for farm products; maintenance of full production and employment in industry.

The situation calls for a struggle against monopoly on all fronts, destruction and socialization of monopoly. Yet the upper capitalist farmers cooperate with monopoly big business. Reactionary elements in the Farm Bureau, the National Council of Farm Cooperatives, the Grange joined with the National Association of Manufacturers and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, the food processors and distributors, in the fight against subsidy payments, in the pressure on Congress to wreck unified federal, state, and local agricultural planning, in the maneuvers to cripple F.S.A., in the campaign against union labor.

Farmer predominance in our population and politics is no more. The development of industry brought the subordination of agriculture. Farmers were excluded from the prosperity of the 1920's, and it can happen again. While the small minority of capitalist farmers unite with monopoly big business, the strategy of free farmers must be unity with progressive labor and the progressive middle class: against monopoly, for democratic economic reconstruction and freedom.

A STORY

# *Dear Sam*

*By* IRWIN STARK

If somebody told you I was going to write a piece like this you'd give me a sweet boost in the can. But I'm going to do it just the same, and I don't know why. It's just when I'm thinking of you sometimes I get a pain between my legs. Not the kind you get for a woman, Sam, but the pain of remembering you, and the block, and all the cockeyed years we were alive together. Maybe it's because nobody would ever think to write a piece about you, because your life didn't amount to so much in dollars and cents. But to me it amounts. Because what are the big guys anyhow, Washington, Jefferson, Abe Lincoln, except what you and the little guys made them? The guy who grabbed a gun at Lexington and Bunker Hill, and froze out his guts at Valley Forge, who spit up his blood at Gettysburg and Shiloh, Henderson Field, and Kasserine Gap? You make a speech about guys like that on Decoration Day or the Fourth of July, and the Tackamuck Democratic Club pays for the flowers, and they put up a wreath on some trees on the Concourse, and they blow some taps on a bugle, and pass out the beer.

So I'm going to write a piece about you, Sam Kaplan.

You were born in a tenement on Hester Street, in a dark, cold bedroom from the body of a woman who had three kids before you. You were born out of the hot screams, and the dirty blood, and the broken nails tearing into the skin, and the moaning fright of the kids cowering under their blankets, and the choked hope of your father praying silently to the shuddering shadows of the candles. And in the morning when the sun broke through in the alley, and the kids came in to see, you were red and ugly, and bawled like hell in the thin light of your first day.

Your father was a dress operator, and he came to America because he wanted to live as a man should live, in the plain beat of his own heart. He wanted to be brave in the dark, to speak out his thoughts to his friends, and to his God, freely and aloud. He remembered the Cossack horses, the mad fury of the peasants, murder. His sister had been raped. His brother's belly had burst from hunger, and his best friend had died

in the prison camps of Siberia. So it didn't matter that he worked twelve hours a day when he first came, that his home was a cold-water flat with roaches, that his biggest view was the gray walls of the tenement across the alley. It didn't matter when the machines dried up, and he waited for a new season.

How long does it take to make an American? A hundred years? A hundred years and the Plymouth Rock? Fifty and a document? Five? Maybe it's not a question of time at all. Maybe it's just a split second in the life of any man, standing in steerage and seeing the Statue of Liberty on a misty winter morning, forgetting the cold, and the hunger, and the puking, the driving rain, the sickening waves, the frozen tears, and the terror of a strange night eating at your bowels. Standing in steerage and knowing this is your dream, this is America, your country now and forever. A breath of cold, clean air, and the hands trembling, a split second in the eager eyes of a man.

You were a dirty kid, Sam Kaplan, with chocolate smeared on your face, a big patch in the knee of your pants, shoes worn out at the tips, and a hungry look always in your eyes. You played cops-and-robbers, Johnny-on-the-pony, shot immies in the gutter, played for picture cards and went nuts about Eddie Polo. You got a dozen black eyes, and handed out a hundred bloody noses. You broke your arm, got measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, and pimples. You fell in love with a redhead in 4B, and you skipped from 5A to 6A, and wrote the third best essay on fire prevention.

And you grew up with tight flesh on your big bones. Your father was making better money, and you moved to the Bronx. You played ball with the gang in Crotona Park, poker in the back yard, and got a bronze medal for placing in the fifty-yard dash at Field Day. You went to high school, played second-string on the basketball team, got a crush on your English teacher and worked in Abe Klein's grocery on Saturdays. You knew the batting average of every man on the Yankees. Bob Shawkey was your favorite pitcher, and you bet two bits the Babe would hit fifty homers that year, and he hit fifty-two. You built a crystal set, and once you got KDKA in Pittsburgh.

You were a hero to your brother, Aaron, and you did a lot of things for him because he was a frail kid and didn't do the things other boys did. You bought him books on his birthdays, and gave him your catcher's

mitt, and when you got the medal for the fifty yard dash you pinned it on him. Your mother liked Aaron a lot, and it broke her up when he died, and the night it happened you walked all the way to the other end of Bronx Park and back.

When you were seventeen you got a job pushing a dress truck, because Miriam was going to college, and she had to keep going till she graduated. She was going to become a school teacher, and that was the most important thing in the world, the Statue of Liberty, and Ellis Island, and the Houston Street sweat shop, the roaches, Aaron's t.b., and every day of your life all packed tight into one solid pip of a dream.

You went out with girls, but you couldn't afford to go steady. You necked in Crotona Park, and went rowing on the Bronx River. You went to dances, and lots of movies, you were secretary of the Spartan A.C., and you shot pool with the boys in Millers on Boston Road. You took the folks to the Yiddish Stock shows in the Franklin Theatre, and you got them tickets for Maurice Schwartz, and you took Miriam to the Bronx Opera House on her birthday. You went to night college for two years, and then you took an exam and became a sub clerk in the Post Office. You shoved mail into a box, and you took all the gaff from a dozen half-ass foremen, and you learned how to sit on the pot when your legs got wobbly, and you made good dough for a kid, but it didn't go to your head even when they made you a regular after five years. Miriam became a school teacher and the family moved to the Concourse, and the old man retired and spent his time arguing politics in Claremont Park with his pals from Bathgate Avenue.

You didn't worry about the country or where it was going after election day. The grass didn't grow on the streets except up in Westchester, and the sun came out even when the banks closed down. You didn't like what was happening in Europe, and they were starting to kill Jews again, but Europe was far away and America was still a free country. You listened to the kids on the soap-boxes, the junior Earl Browders, and the junior Norman Thomases, and they said a lot of right things, but you weren't living in a world ten thousand years away. You voted a straight ticket after you reached twenty-one, and kept your feet on the good earth. You wore a white collar and wanted to keep it clean. You didn't believe in the class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the rest of the pretty bull, but if a guy wanted to believe in it, o.k.,

he had a right to believe in it. He had a right to sell the *Daily Worker,* the *Daily News, The Call, The Fourth International,* the *New York Times,* or the *Hobo News.* It was a free country.

You began to go steady with a girl named Selma, a small, dark, serious girl who lived on Bronx Park East. You met her at a dance one night, took her boating around City Island, and went up to Bear Mountain with her on the Day Line. She came to the house for dinner, and your mother didn't take to her at first, but she cooked a dinner one Friday night with gefülltefish, and egg noodles for the soup, and after that they got along first class. This was the real thing, Sam, the McCoy, and you knew it right down through the hole in your socks. This wasn't a fly by night, a one night necker, a dime a dance blind date to nowhere. This was the real thing, fourteen karat.

You wanted a family, a home, three kids, a garden, a pair of fancy slippers, and an innerspring mattress.

Why didn't you get married then, get a kid, two or three like you wanted? You saw it coming, you weren't dumb, and lots of good people were doing it. It was the natural thing. You weren't a patriot, a hundred and one percenter. You didn't sing the Star-Spangled Banner three times a day, and four times on Sundays and holidays. You were a sucker just the same.

That's it, straight from the book. You were the biggest sucker this side of Loew's Paradise. You got a crazy tingle down the edge of your spine when an American flag passed by, you hoped you didn't get red, and nobody was looking, but there it was just the same. It wasn't your war, you told yourself, and some things the soapbox boys said were honest to God true, if you thought about it. You could fight a war here for the wage slaves, or the black brother strung to a tree. There were silvershirts, brownshirts, blackshirts stinking up the Central Park of America like millions of rotten weeds. Well, maybe you didn't think. You were a sucker, and for what? The Bronx River, and the Yankee Stadium, boxes or bleachers, and Joe Gordon, and Push-em-up Tony, and Broadway on a Saturday night, and Gasoline Alley, and Mutt and Jeff, and Starlight Park, and the Day Line, and the World's Fair, and Madison Square Garden, and Barnum and Bailey, and the Staten Island Ferry, and Mardi Gras at Coney Island, and the Bronx Zoo, and Goldman's Band in sum-

mer over the Harlem. You were a sucker for steerage west. To the New World.

So you told her one night before you left her, and she cried like a baby, and they all came down to see you off, and you looked fine from the ground up. And you kissed them all, and your mother didn't cry till it was over, and the old man's hand was like a frozen lump of steel.

And just before the train pulled out you said, "I'll be seein' you!"

A train pulling out is no place for a piece to end, but what am I going to do? Put in a lot of fancy crap I don't know from nothing about? Army camp, shots in the arm, basic training, the first stripe, furlough, and port of embarkation?

Your letters were to everybody, your parents, Miriam, Selma and her family, even a note at the end for some of the boys. You were never much at writing letters, just boxing them, and reading the postcards from the borsht-belt when you got bored around 3 a.m. on the midnight tour. So you wrote about the weather, and the sand, and the flies, and how you were learning to parley vous, and the food was like Friday nights at home, almost, and you loved everybody, and there was a lot of scenery. And then the weeks went by, and the letter came at last from the War Department, and it wasn't about the weather, and it didn't say where it had happened or how, but it didn't seem to make so much of a difference.

So the train pulls out. Where is it going, Sam? Kasserine Gap, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Djebez-el-this, Djebez-el-that? Names on a map, place names, foreign names, bumps on a long white winding road, hot sand at Coney Island, Brighton Beach, Rockaway, Castle Hill Swimming Pool, hot sand, a white church with a hole through the roof, a dozen houses, and a hill with a tree and a five by two cemetery with fifty white crosses, and sand and a white winding road, and a dark Italian priest with a gold cross hanging down on his cassock.

Where is it going? Steerage west maybe—to the New World? Or steerage east—to the Old? How should I know?

# THE DEMOCRATIC FAITH AND EDUCATION

*By* JOHN DEWEY

NOT EVEN THE MOST FAR-SEEING of men could have predicted, no longer ago than fifty years, the course events have taken. The expectations that were entertained by men of generous outlook are in fact chiefly notable in that the actual course of events has moved, and with violence, in the opposite direction. The ardent and hopeful social idealist of the last century or so has been proved so wrong that a reaction to the opposite extreme has taken place. A recent writer has even proposed a confraternity of pessimists who should live together in some sort of social oasis. It is a fairly easy matter to list the articles of that old faith which, from the standpoint of today, have been tragically frustrated.

The first article on the list had to do with the prospects of the abolition of war. It was held that the revolution which was taking place in commerce and communication would break down the barriers which had kept the peoples of the earth alien and hostile and would create a state of interdependence which in time would insure lasting peace. Only an extreme pessimist ventured to suggest that interdependence might multiply points of friction and conflict.

Another item of that creed was the belief that a general development of enlightenment and rationality was bound to follow the increase in knowledge and the diffusion which would result from the revolution in science that was taking place. Since it had long been held that rationality and freedom were intimately allied, it was held that the movement toward democratic institutions and popular government which had produced in succession the British, American, and French Revolutions was bound to spread until freedom and equality were the foundations of political government in every country of the globe.

A time of general ignorance and popular unenlightenment and a time of despotic and oppressive governmental rule were taken to be practically synonymous. Hence the third article of faith. There was a general

belief among social philosophers that governmental activities were necessarily more or less oppressive; that governmental action tended to be an artificial interference with the operation of natural laws. Consequently the spread of enlightenment and democratic institutions would produce a gradual but assured withering away of the powers of the political state. Freedom was supposed to be so deeply rooted in the very nature of men that given the spread of rational enlightenment it would take care of itself with only a minimum of political action confined to insuring external police order.

The other article of faith to be mentioned was the general belief that the vast, the almost incalculable, increase in productivity resulting from the industrial revolution was bound to raise the general standard of living to a point where extreme poverty would be practically eliminated. It was believed that the opportunity to lead a decent, self-respecting, because self-sufficient, economic life would be assured to everyone who was physically and morally normal.

The course of events culminating in the present situation suffice to show without any elaborate argument how grievously these generous expectations have been disappointed. Instead of universal peace, there are two wars worldwide in extent and destructive beyond anything known in all history. Instead of uniform and steady growth of democratic freedom and equality, we have the rise of powerful totalitarian states with thoroughgoing suppression of liberty of belief and expression, outdoing the most despotic states of previous history. We have an actual growth in importance and range of governmental action in legislation and administration as necessary means of rendering freedom on the part of the many an assured actual fact. Instead of promotion of economic security and movement toward the elimination of poverty, we have had a great increase in the extent and the intensity of industrial crises with great increase of inability of workers to find employment. Social instability has reached a point that may portend revolution if it goes on unchecked.

Externally it looks as if the pessimists had the best of the case. But before we reach a conclusion on that point, we have to inquire concerning the solidity of the premise upon which the idealistic optimists rested their case. This principle was that the desirable goals held in view were to be accomplished by a complex of forces to which in their entirety the name

"Nature" was given. In practical effect, acceptance of this principle was equivalent to adoption of a policy of drift as far as human intelligence and effort were concerned. No conclusion is warranted until we have inquired how far failure and frustration are consequences of putting our trust in a policy of drift; a policy of letting "George" in the shape of Nature and Natural Law do the work which only human intelligence and effort could possibly accomplish. No conclusion can be reached until we have considered an alternative: What is likely to happen if we recognize that the responsibility for creating a state of peace internationally, and of freedom and economic security internally, has to be carried by deliberate cooperative human effort? Technically speaking the policy known as *Laissez-faire* is one of limited application. But its limited and technical significance is one instance of a manifestation of widespread trust in the ability of impersonal forces, popularly called Nature, to do a work that has in fact to be done by human insight, foresight, and purposeful planning.

Not all the men of the earlier period were of the idealistic type. The idealistic philosophy was a positive factor in permitting those who prided themselves upon being realistic to turn events so as to produce consequences dictated by their own private and class advantage. The failure of cooperative and collective intelligence and effort to intervene was an invitation to immediate short-term intervention by those who had an eye to their own profit. The consequences were wholesale destruction and waste of natural resources, increase of social instability, and mortgaging of the future to a transitory and brief present of so-called prosperity. If "idealists" were misguided in what they failed to do, "realists" were wrong in what they did. If the former erred in supposing that the drift (called by them progress or evolution) was inevitably toward the better, the latter were more actively harmful because their insistence upon trusting to natural laws was definitely in the interest of personal and class profit.

The omitted premise in the case of both groups is the fact that neither science nor technology is an impersonal cosmic force. They operate only in the medium of human desire, foresight, aim, and effort. Science and technology are transactions in which man and nature work together and in which the human factor is that directly open to modification and direction. That man takes part along with physical conditions in inven-

tion and use of the devices, implements, and machinery of industry and commerce no one would think of denying.

But in practice, if not in so many words, it has been denied that man has any responsibility for the consequences that result from what he invents and employs. This denial is implicit in our widespread refusal to engage in large-scale collective planning. Not a day passes, even in the present crisis, when the whole idea of such planning is not ridiculed as an emanation from the brain of starry-eyed professors or of others equally inept in practical affairs. And all of this in the face of the fact that there is not a successful industrial organization that does not owe its success to persistent planning within a limited field—with an eye to profit—to say nothing of the terribly high price we have paid in the way of insecurity and war for putting our trust in drift.

Refusal to accept responsibility for looking ahead and for planning in matters national and international is based upon refusal to employ in social affairs, in the field of human relations, the methods of observation, interpretation, and test that are matters of course in dealing with physical things, and to which we owe the conquest of physical nature. The net result is a state of imbalance, of profoundly disturbed equilibrium between our physical knowledge and our social-moral knowledge. This lack of harmony is a powerful factor in producing the present crisis with all its tragic features. For physical knowledge and physical technology have far outstripped social or humane knowledge and human engineering. Our failure to use in matters of direct human concern the scientific methods which have revolutionized physical knowledge has permitted the latter to dominate the social scene.

The change in the physical aspect of the world has gone on so rapidly that there is probably no ground for surprise in the fact that our psychological and moral knowledge has not kept pace. But there is cause for astonishment in the fact that after the catastrophe of war, insecurity, and the threat to democratic institutions have shown the need for new moral and intellectual attitudes and habits that will correspond with the changed state of the world, there should be a definite campaign to make the scientific attitude the scapegoat for present evils, while a return to the beliefs and practices of a prescientific and pretechnological age is urged as the road to our salvation.

II

The organized attack now being made against science and against technology as inherently materialistic and as usurping the place properly held by abstract moral precepts—abstract because divorcing ends from the means by which they must be realized—defines the issue we now have to face. Shall we go backwards or shall we go ahead to discover and put into practice the means by which science and technology shall be made fundamental in the promotion of human welfare? The failure to use scientific methods in creating understanding of human relationships and interests and in planning measures and policies that correspond in human affairs to the technologies in physical use is easily explained in historical terms. The new science began with things at the furthest remove from human affairs, namely with the stars of the heavens. From astronomy the new methods went on to win their victories in physics and chemistry. Still later science was applied in physiological and biological subject-matter. At every stage, the advance met determined resistance from the representatives of established institutions who felt their prestige was bound up with maintenance of old beliefs and found their class-control of others being threatened. In consequence, many workers in science found that the easiest way in which to procure an opportunity to carry on their inquiries was to adopt an attitude of extreme specialization. The effect was equivalent to the position that their methods and conclusions were not and could not be "dangerous," since they had no point of contact with man's serious moral concerns. This position in turn served to perpetuate and confirm the older separation of man as man from the rest of nature and to intensify the split between the "material" and the moral and "ideal."

Thus it has come about that when scientific inquiry began to move from its virtually complete victories in astronomy and physics and its partial victory in the field of living things over into the field of human affairs and concerns, the interests and institutions that offered resistance to its earlier advance are gathering themselves together for a final attack upon that aspect of science which in truth constitutes its supreme and culminating significance. On the principle that offense is the best defense, respect for science and loyalty to its outlook are attacked as the chief source of all our present social ills. One may read, for example, in current

literature such a condescending concession as marks the following passage: "Of course, the scientific attitude, though often leading to such a catastrophe, is not to be condemned," the immediate context showing that the particular "catastrophe" in mind consists of "errors leading to war . . . derived from an incorrect theory of truth." Since these errors are produced by belief in the applicability of scientific method to human as well as physical facts, the remedy, according to this writer is to abandon "the erroneous application of the methods and results of natural science to the problems of human life."

In three respects the passage is typical of the organized campaign now in active operation. There is first the assertion that such catastrophes as that of the present war are the result of devotion to scientific method and conclusions. The denunciation of "natural" science as applied to human affairs carries, in the second place, the implication that man is outside of and above nature, and the consequent necessity of returning to the medieval prescientific doctrine of a supernatural foundation and outlook in all social and moral subjects. Then thirdly there is the assumption, directly contrary to fact, that the scientific method has at the present time been seriously and systematically applied to the problems of human life.

I dignify the passage quoted by this reference to it because it serves quite as well as a multitude of other passages from reactionaries would to convey a sense of the present issue. It is true that the *results* of natural science have had a large share, for evil as well as for good, in bringing the world to its present pass. But it is equally true that "natural" science has been identified with *physical* science in a sense in which the physical is set over against the human. It is true that the interests and institutions which are now attacking science are just the forces which in behalf of a supernatural center of gravity are those that strive to maintain this tragic split in human affairs. Now the issue, as is becoming clearer every day, is whether we shall go backward or whether we shall go forward toward recognition in theory and practice of the indissoluble unity of the humanistic and the naturalistic.

## III

What has all this to do with education? The answer to this question may be gathered from the fact that those who are engaged in assault

upon science center their attacks upon the increased attention given by our schools to science and to its application in vocational training. In a world which is largely what it is today because of science and technology they propose that education should turn its back upon even the degree of recognition science and technology have received. They propose we turn our face to the medievalism in which so-called "liberal" arts were identified with literary arts: a course natural to adopt in an age innocent of knowledge of nature, an age in which the literary arts were the readiest means of rising above barbarism through acquaintance with the achievements of Greek-Roman culture. Their proposal is so remote from the facts of the present world, it involves such a bland ignoring of actualities, that there is a temptation to dismiss it as idle vaporing. But it would be a tragic mistake to take the reactionary assaults so lightly. For they are an expression of just the forces that keep science penned up in a compartment labelled "materialistic and anti-human." They strengthen all the habits and institutions which render that which is morally "ideal" impotent in action and which leave the "material" to operate without humane direction.

Let me return for the moment to my initial statement that the basic error of social idealists was the assumption that something called "natural law" could be trusted, with only incidental cooperation by human beings, to bring about the desired ends. The lesson to be learned is that human attitudes and efforts are the strategic center for promotion of the generous aims of peace among nations; promotion of economic security; the use of political means in order to advance freedom and equality; and the worldwide cause of democratic institutions. Anyone who starts from this premise is bound to see that it carries with it the basic importance of education in creating the habits and the outlook that are able and eager to secure the ends of peace, democracy, and economic stability.

When this is seen, it will also be seen how little has actually been done in our schools to render science and technology active agencies in creating the attitudes and dispositions and in securing the kinds of knowledge that are capable of coping with the problems of men and women today. Externally a great modification has taken place in subjects taught and in methods of teaching them. But when the changes are critically examined it is found that they consist largely in emergency concessions and accommodation to the urgent conditions and issues of the contempo-

rary world. The standards and the controlling methods in education are still mainly those of a prescientific and pretechnological age. This statement will seem to many persons to be exaggerated. But consider the purposes which as a rule still govern instruction in just those subjects that are taken to be decisively "modern," namely science and vocational preparation. Science is taught upon the whole as a body of readymade information and technical skills. It is not taught as furnishing in its method the pattern for all effective intelligent conduct. It is taught upon the whole not with respect to the way in which it actually enters into human life, and hence as a supremely humanistic subject, but as if it had to do with a world which is "external" to human concerns. It is not presented in connection with the ways in which it actually enters into every aspect and phase of present human life. And it is hardly necessary to add that still less is it taught in connection with what scientific knowledge of human affairs might do in overcoming sheer drift. Scientific method and conclusions will not have gained a fundamentally important place in education until they are seen and treated as supreme agencies in giving direction to collective and cooperative human behavior.

The same sort of thing is to be said about the kind of use now made in education of practical and vocational subjects, so called. The reactionary critics are busy urging that the latter subjects be taught to the masses—who are said to be incapable of rising to the plane of the "intellectual" but who do the useful work which somebody has to do, and who may be taught by vocational education to do it more effectively. This view is of course an open and avowed attempt to return to that dualistic separation of ideas and action, of the "intellectual" and the "practical," of the liberal and servile arts, that marked the feudal age. And this reactionary move in perpetuation of the split from which the world is suffering is offered as a cure, a panacea, not as the social and moral quackery it actually is. As is the case with science, the thing supremely needful is to go forward. And the forward movement in the case of technology as in the case of science is to do away with the chasm which ancient and medieval educational practice and theory set up between the liberal and the vocational, not to treat the void, the hole, constituted by this chasm, as if it were a foundation for the creation of free society.

There is nothing whatever inherent in the occupations that are socially necessary and useful to divide them into those which are "learned"

professions and those which are menial, servile, and illiberal. As far as such a separation exists in fact it is an inheritance from the earlier class structure of human relations. It is a denial of democracy. At the very time when an important, perhaps *the* important, problem in education is to fill education having an occupational direction with a genuinely liberal content, we have, believe it or not, a movement, such as is sponsored for example by President Hutchins, to cut vocational training off from any contact with what is liberating by relegating it to special schools devoted to inculcation of technical skills. Inspiring vocational education with a liberal spirit and filling it with a liberal content is not a utopian dream. It is a demonstrated possibility in schools here and there in which subjects usually labelled "practically useful" are taught charged with scientific understanding and with a sense of the social-moral applications they potentially possess.

## IV

If little is said in the foregoing remarks specifically upon the topic of democratic faith, it is because their bearing upon a democratic outlook largely appears upon their very face. Conditions in this country when the democratic philosophy of life and democratic institutions were taking shape were such as to encourage a belief that the latter were so natural to man, so appropriate to his very being, that if they were once established they would tend to maintain themselves. I cannot rehearse here the list of events that have given this naive faith a shock. They are contained in every deliberate attack upon democracy and in every expression of cynicism about its past failures and pessimism about its future—attacks and expressions which have to be taken seriously if they are looked at as signs of trying to establish democracy as an end in separation from the concrete means upon which the end depends.

Democracy is not an easy road to take and follow. On the contrary, it is as far as its realization is concerned in the complex conditions of the contemporary world a supremely difficult one. Upon the whole we are entitled to take courage from the fact that it has worked as well as it has done. But to this courage we must add, if our courage is to be intelligent rather than blind, the fact that successful maintenance of democracy demands the utmost in use of the best available methods to procure a social knowledge that is reasonably commensurate with our physical

knowledge, and the invention and use of forms of social engineering reasonably commensurate with our technological abilities in physical affairs.

This then is the task indicated. It is, if we employ large terms, to humanize science. This task in the concrete cannot be accomplished save as the fruit of science, which is named technology, is also humanized. And the task can be executed in the concrete only as it is broken up into vital applications of intelligence in a multitude of fields to a vast diversity of problems so that science and technology may be rendered servants of the democratic hope and faith. The cause is capable of inspiring loyalty in thought and deed. But there has to be joined to aspiration and effort the formation of free, wide-ranging, trained attitudes of observation and understanding such as incorporate within themselves, as a matter so habitual as to be unconscious, the vital principles of scientific method. In this achievement science, education, and the democratic cause meet as one. May we be equal to the occasion. For it is our human problem and if a solution is found it will be through the medium of human desire, human understanding, and human endeavor.

# LIBERALS DON'T HAVE TO BE TIRED

*By* GEORGE R. GEIGER

WITHOUT QUESTION the words "liberal" and "liberalism" have by now become terms of opprobrium. Not that they ever have been anything else in the more illiterate right-wing circles, say, those of Martin Dies and (most of) the Republican Party: that's not the concern of this particular discussion. It is rather the contempt to be found in the allegedly sophisticated set, right and left, that seems so formidable and so dangerous. To be specific, despite the world of difference between Pitirim Sorokin, Peter Drucker, Reinhold Niebuhr, and orthodox Marxists (if there are any left), they can all unite in a lusty thumping of the liberal and even the "progressive." (The latter term has been gradually substituted for the former, but it, too, has become suspect: witness the recent removal of the name by the erstwhile Progressive Education Association.)

But the problem is not simply one of semantics, although there is no doubt that "liberalism," like "socialism," "communism," "collectivism," "fascism," "individualism," "bureaucracy," and a host of others, has fallen victim to the word-blocks that have almost paralyzed contemporary political thinking. Nor is the problem only one of history, i.e., remembrances of the eighteenth and nineteenth century liberalism that was so closely associated with laissez faire and the Manchester school. The collapse of that unhappy philosophy helped to blacken the name of liberal, of course, but there is more to it than that. For it is not until the twentieth century, or rather until World War I, that the "tired liberal" begins to emerge as an object of concentrated ridicule; and it remained for the age of totalitarianism to put barbs into the ridicule, those of ideological contempt, not to say of hate.

What, then, is this reputed liberalism that is so weak and contemptible, yet, paradoxically, so dangerous that it needs constant belaboring? Is it a straw man that is being thrown over, a caricature to be easily erased?

And is there a genuine liberalism that at all costs must be preserved? These are some of the questions that will be attacked here.

* * *

Overshadowing every other feature of the indicted liberal is that of his supposed inactivity, which is traceable to his purported habits of tentativeness, of seeing both sides of the question, of weighing issues too long and too carefully; so, he never makes up his mind to do anything and constantly vacillates between "yes" and "no," winding up usually with an anemic "maybe." There is a pathetic reasonableness to his conduct that makes him pathologically wistful or, in times of crisis, dangerously obstructionist.

A companion characteristic is his relativism. He doesn't believe in absolutes; therefore he can't take anything too seriously. This is, of course, a reason for his abulia, his inability to make up his mind. If there is no absolute right or wrong in political ethics, why be positive to the point of taking decisive action? In its exaggerated form this particular criticism sees the relativism of the liberal preventing him from choosing between, say, fascism and democracy, because neither one can be regarded as indubitably valid or invalid. In an even more exaggerated form, a form that is perhaps too ignorant or vicious to be taken quite seriously, the present criticism finds the liberal actually embracing fascism because it "works"—the liberal, being a relativist, is also, you see, a pragmatist. . . .

Thirdly, despite his vacillation and his avoidance of certainties, the liberal is a naive optimist. He has accepted the eighteenth-century idea of inevitable progress and the idea that man is somehow rational, good, and trustworthy. Unless he becomes too tired, he thus refuses to worry. Things will work themselves out. When things don't work out, largely because man is really a sinful creature, the liberal is hurt and bewildered. (This particular segment of the liberal's composite portrait is, of course, the contribution of Reinhold Niebuhr.)

Here, then, is the liberal, and these are the reasons why he is forever tired and ineffectual, the pawn of whatever power can manipulate him at any given moment. Now, that there is an element of shrewd observation in this indictment is unquestionable. There is plenty of frustration among liberals (among others, too) and in people called liberals are certain to be found at times emotional blocks that arrest action and

occasionally induce psychopathic states. Also, the record of liberals (of others, too) is not immaculate; there have been notorious backslidings, apostasies, tragic fumblings—an entire catalog of incompetency and even malice. Nevertheless, it must be clear from the overstatement in the above description that this wholesale challenge to the liberal is being regarded as a libel and that it cannot be accepted. A dead horse is being whipped by the anti-liberals, whatever their complexion; a cartoon is being mistaken for the living person. What then is wrong? Is the trouble with liberals or their critics, or with something still larger?

* * *

It will not be out of place to center the discussion on a brief analysis of what is implied by scientific method, for, to anticipate, *the whole thesis of this present defense of the liberal spirit will be to correlate that spirit with the recognized attitude of science.* Many things can be said of that attitude. At least three of them need particular mention.

### Tentativeness

To be scientific in spirit is not merely to use instruments. It is rather to use the powerful weapons of hypothesis, probability, and critical caution, the only weapons that can overcome the persuasion of supposedly final judgments. Such weapons may well be looked upon as the unique contribution that science has made to modern culture; this is because the use of tentative and hypothetical judgments furnishes the one tool man has discovered that allows him to manipulate a mass of technological knowledge, revolutionary in its pattern of change.

Even in its majestic natural laws science does not find ultimate pronouncements: they are hypotheses or theories that have reached a present stage of overwhelming probability. They are indeed "true" in a given area at a given time; "tomorrow," said William James, "we shall be prepared to call them false." This temper of deliberate doubt and suspended (final) judgment is applicable to the rigorous findings of astrophysics; how much more would it be to the lesser claims on knowledge that man can make? There is no more characteristic test of the scientific attitude than a refusal to become awed by any human discovery or invention to the point of staking it out as something eternal and unalterable.

But one thing must be made clear immediately. It is a travesty on scientific method to suppose that this spirit of tentativeness and this

reliance on probability is in any way a confession of indecision. Action is not suspended because of the absence of eternal verities; on the contrary, one of the distinguishing marks of science is that it is above all "operational." The idea that action is inhibited because hypotheses fall short of universal necessity is sheer caricature. History of science is the surest repudiation of such a fantasy, since nearly every discovery has been projected along advance lines that, at the outset, have been no more than provisional, even make-shift. Hypotheses by their nature are actionable. Unless predictable operations can follow, the entire sequence of scientific method is contradicted. Yet no one can demand a 100-to-0 chance before experiments can be performed. Even the "science" of poker would collapse if certainty were required before a bet were risked! Action is not curtailed by even a 60-40 chance, or less—not merely horse-racing action but *scientific* action.

What *is* supported by scientific method, however, is that when action is initiated on a less-than-certainty basis, provision is made for the "minority" hypothesis. Even though, as one of a number of multiple working suggestions, it is not at the moment being acted upon, the idea is not "liquidated" but is ready to serve as a future substitute for a rejected or unsuccessful theory. There is present a tolerance that often is missing elsewhere. But a mistake must be avoided even here. When scientific operations are performed on the basis of the probable and tentative truth of some hypothesis, they are not for that reason entered into lackadaisically and without spirit. Any such notion is a perversion of what actually happens. If hypothesis A is accepted for purposes of experimentation, it is genuinely accepted; and, *for the course of the experiment,* it is as resolutely followed as though it came from Mount Sinai. The experimenter does not waver because he is dealing with a *mere* hypothesis. For the only way any hypothesis can achieve status is to employ the mechanism of "if-then": what predictable implications will follow granting for the time being its validity?

On the other hand, the scientific use of hypothetical method does not permit theories to become dogmas. Hypothesis B, C, n . . . will still remain. Nor will implications and verified consequences be ignored just because hypothesis A seems to be particularly august. Although a working theory will be held provisionally true while experiment goes on, obser-

vation is not sacrificed to prejudice. Again, this is a lesson of scientific method that many have failed to learn.

### Operationalism

A second familiar characteristic of the scientific attitude or method has been called "operationalism" by Professor Bridgman of Harvard. (However, the idea is little different in essence from the pragmatic formulas of Charles Peirce and William James, or from the instrumentalism of John Dewey.) It is based on one of the requirements of any good hypothesis, i.e., that it lead to verifiable experiment where something can actually be done with it. That requirement may be expanded to include an entire philosophic outlook; at the very least, it throws a floodlight on the "meaning of meaning."

The operational attitude can be expressed quite simply: the meaning of any idea depends on certain specific procedures that must accompany it. When those procedures are absent, the idea is thereby "meaningless." It is not necessarily a "bad" idea or even a "false" one; it is merely outside the area of comprehension. For example, suppose there were two, and only two, objects in the entire universe. Call them A and B. They can be atoms, lovers, stars, what you will. Suppose now they were able to notice that the distance between them was growing smaller, that they were approaching each other. Which of them is moving? Does A move to B, B to A, or are both in motion? Obviously, since there is no other thing in the universe and so no frame of reference to go by, there is no way of finding out. No operation can be performed to indicate how the problem can be solved. Therefore the question is meaningless. If A (female) is confident that B (male) is the one in motion, intuition or transcendental revelation would be the only "operations" available.

Operationalism as a criterion of scientific method is in no way confined to physical or even to natural science. Laboratory procedures are not the only legitimate operations. The travesty of insisting, because men and nations can't be crammed into test tubes or become as mutely responsive as litmus paper, that therefore the "sciences" of psychology and sociology are misnomers, indicates an evasion of this whole point. Operationalism connotes a general attitude or methodological standard. It is to the effect that hypotheses of any nature in any field must carry with them the means for their justification or rejection. Those means

don't have to be the monopoly of physics or chemistry. Each area of human experience is genuine and each demands its own tools. But the over-all tool is the temper that is being suggested here: significant concepts in any dimension of man's knowledge are those that present the working techniques which alone make the concepts meaningful.

### Criticism

Another element in the scientific attitude is the "critical" characteristic celebrated by every portrait of science. But what does it mean to be critical? It is not sufficient to proclaim that to be critical means to be skeptical, to take nothing for granted, to refuse the aid of unsupported authority or hearsay. These are elementary points, accurate enough if correctly interpreted, but manifestly inadequate. It would be more honest, and unquestionably more sophisticated, to insist that "critical" means the ability to make intelligent choices.

A critical attitude of mind is not one that just doesn't give a damn. Criticism and indifference are incompatible. The very least a scientist must do—even if he is in truth the much-caricatured entomologist devoting his whole life to one rare butterfly—is decide what data are relevant for his study, what problems are significant, what hypotheses fruitful. Such decisions can never be completely objective or neutral. They involve selection, choice between alternatives, preference among competing interests, saying yes here and no there. This process of selection automatically establishes a system of values. The term "value" has been introduced deliberately since it may provide a link back to our inquiry on the liberal. That transition would recognize, first, that liberalism as a complex of ethical, economic, and political ideas is above all an enterprise dealing in values; and, second, it would raise the question whether the methods of science have any relation to values. *That they are indeed very closely related would be the contention of the genuine liberal.*

### Values and Scientific Method

It must be confessed that to declare values subject to scientific treatment has a very unfamiliar ring. Perhaps the reason for the unfamiliarity is that many persons have come to regard "science" and "scientific" as something quite different from what they really are. They have come to be regarded as absolute, irrevocable, and objective in the sense of standing entirely outside the ambit of human events. In the advertising

pages of the magazines and on the radio air-waves "Science" becomes a fake god to be worshipped and a Hollywood theology to be learned. What it does legitimately represent has just been suggested—a method of intelligent inquiry and control, the method being above all a self-corrective one. Given such a viewpoint of science it must follow that no human situation lies automatically beyond it, no human problem is forever divorced from human intelligence.

In such a claim there is nothing presumptuous nor fantastic provided that the meaning of science is remembered, the meaning that focuses on an attitude of mind and a temper of approach. As we have seen, dominating that attitude is the hypothetical spirit. The natural laws and even the "facts" of physical science are looked upon as theories with a very high degree of probability; they are neither absolute nor unamendable, they are not dogmas. If then men are to think reflectively about values, about human choices and interests and their social setting, it would appear that the first requirement for such thinking is to regard values, however precious and long-standing, as significant hypotheses that are to be handled as science handles its own largest generalizations and assumptions.

But isn't this the rule anyway? The answer is so tragically in the negative that it almost points the way down which man's possible ruin may be waiting. For values have traditionally been something to fight for rather than understand. The "retreat from reason" that has so characteristically dominated the last decades and that prepared the ground for totalitarian solutions of political and economic problems has been but one more example of an age-old reliance on force, reiteration, and bloodletting to decide the validity of man's most intimate beliefs. The religious persecutions and moral harassments of an earlier day were fitting ancestors of the economic and political and racial terrorizations of ours. And it is no oversimplification of this ancient and modern history of man's inhumanity to man to say that it is in great measure the product of a prescientific absolutism. Instead of considering values as hypotheses, as amendable statements of the conditions and requirements under which man alone can live, we have, with a criminal persistence, put them beyond the realm of science and thinking by making them eternal and unconditional. Therefore, the only way to manipulate them is through power alone.

Equally unscientific is the inverse ratio, in matters of ethics, economics, and politics, between man's knowledge and his convictions. The most exact of the physical sciences will make no statement without allowing for a probable error, a margin where unavoidable mistakes can be discounted. But who ever heard of a declaration in political economy or morals being put forward with an admission of probable error? This is of course an exaggeration; yet the almost fatal tragedy is that men are most passionately certain when they are most ignorant. In matters of values the lesson of tentativeness has not yet been learned.

What of "operationalism" as it might apply to values? It must be confessed that this aspect of scientific method has as yet little to show in the area of value. Particularly is there a lack of operations, such as are found in the physical and life sciences, that tie together entire fields of activity. There are, of course, many phases of social psychology, economics, and politics that can be regarded as operational, and there is without doubt a growing interest in what may be called "social engineering." But the very least to be noted here is the axiom that a proposition is meaningless for science unless in some way it can be implemented. It must be actionable. This applies to economics or ethics as well as to chemistry. Once again, the precise operations need have little if anything in common; test tubes have minor relevance for politics. That's not the issue. The issue is one of making *specific* the implications and requirements of any value-hypothesis, including among the implications the predictable consequences that may be expected to follow, and among the requirements the appropriate techniques and instruments that are to be employed. This certainly sounds simple enough. It does not matter if the operations proposed are as unlike those of the laboratory as winning a political election, or clearing a slum, or carrying on a new experiment in education, or changing the eating or entertainment habits of a nation. They may be incredibly long-range or even appear like desperate fumbling: yet some action must be foreshadowed, some specific, concrete difference must be made somewhere if a value-hypothesis is to take the first step toward verification. This is the very minimum that can be demanded of social science. Without any movement toward the initiating of actual operations, social values must be condemned to remain no more than hortatory exclamations.

The critical aspect of scientific method is familiar enough to require no additional elaboration in turning it to the service of human values. Yet pressure needs to be exerted on the idea that no value, just as no natural law, is to be taken for granted. There is nothing exempt from critical evaluation. Obviously this is not meant to be subversive. To be examined does not mean to be rejected. A value, say, democracy or happiness or economic security must be weak indeed if it cannot suffer close scrutiny. Critical examination may actually strengthen the object involved. But, strengthened or weakened, a moral claim becomes at best smug, and at worst an intolerant and intolerable dogma, if it is thought to be in some privileged way above criticism. Science and philosophy would unite in repudiating any such privilege asserted of any human experience whatsoever.

These three aspects then—tentativeness, operationalism, and criticism —are basic in constituting the general attitude of science (or of philosophy). There is no reason why that spirit needs to be absent from the realm of human values, of social affairs. If it is absent, what are the alternatives? What or who is to have jurisdiction over value? What is the substitute for intelligent inquiry here? If scientific method is not employed—however difficult, even impudent, it may be to try to employ it—must not rampant emotion be given a free field and so create that tragic gap between ideas and wishing, a gap that yearns to be filled, if in no other way than by authoritarian cement?

There is, of course, nothing facile in this contention of the liberal that scientific method must be applied to all areas of human experience, to politics and religion as well as to physics. His argument is simply that they *can* be so treated and *must* be, at least if man is ever going to end his troubles. That there are enormous practical difficulties to be overcome is transparently clear; but those obstacles are not theoretical obstacles. That is, there is nothing in the intrinsic nature of human value that condemns it, in some a priori fashion, to remain forever the plaything of wishful thinking, pious exhortation, or brute force. It is not because men are men and not amoebas or rock formations that their actions and beliefs must always be ascientific. Such a delusion is magnified, deliberately or unconsciously, every time we are told that "you can't put men into test tubes."

As we have seen, putting things into test tubes is by no means a synonym for intelligent inquiry.

* * *

Well, what has this brief excursion into scientific method to contribute to a picture of our alleged latterday liberal? Specifically, what has it to say about the first two features of that portrait, those that draw the liberal as necessarily inactive, fatuous, and vacillating because he is forced to waver between two sides of every question and has no certain belief to which he can hold fast? Does not this accusation rest clearly upon a major assumption—*that unless there is absolute certainty in economics and politics nothing can be done*? Which, of course, is the basic assumption of all brands of totalitarianism. Unless there is a religious, not to say a mystical, unanimity on doctrine action is postponed. No place for the opposition, for the exception, for the minority can be found. For, so runs the argument, without certitude there can be only (liberal) fumbling, hesitation, and impotence. It is not too much to say that the antidemocratic delusions of the last decades found their philosophic strength in the constipated notion that tentativeness of judgment means suspense of action. This is a mischievous perversion of a methodology that, in fact, has made more things move than has any other force in Western culture. But it is action that has still made place for the opposition, for the exception, for the minority, because the hypothetical attitude has become an inescapable part of the scientist's intellectual furniture.

The tentative spirit is not something of sweet reasonableness. It is not sweetness and light and the joys of both sides of a question and refuge from action that guide the scientist to the use of hypotheses instead of dogmas. It is cold-blooded realism. For no other way has yet been discovered to control a modern technology that is revolutionary in its impact. Its dynamic has allowed nothing to remain unchanged: knowledge, custom, mores, governments, social systems, philosophies and religions—all have undergone fantastic amendment. It has been argued, and the argument is eminently plausible, that except the invention of fire nothing has happened to man of more importance than the industrial revolution. Nothing has brought about more constant and profound alteration in every aspect of his life. Were scientific method rigid and inflexible, technological knowledge would be impossible to handle. That is why tenta-

tiveness and the hypothetical spirit are applauded: they provide a strategy for action. Indeed, it is not too much to argue that the unique contribution of modern culture has been precisely this repudiation by science of final, unbudgeable judgments of the type that still seem to coerce respect in religion and politics. Elasticity is a sign neither of flabbiness nor of starry-eyedness. It is a tool that alone is capable of adjusting to the changing demands of an expanding technology. All this is reason, then, why a "liberal" set of values must take its stand against dogmatism, not because it is nasty or intolerant but because it is inelastic: and inelasticity, the failure to adjust, is as fatal for ethics as for dinosaurs.

We can go still further and suggest that the scientific and liberal temper of mind is, to quote one of the editors of this magazine, the "strategy for democracy." Without attempting to introduce an entirely new topic, it still can be noted that one premise stands out clearly in any discussion of democracy, political, economic, or philosophical: it is that answers to problems are not discoverable in any one person or group, however elite, but in the contributions of all; that "truth" is not revealed to a leader or to a class but is a product of "the assemblage of unique qualities in all men." This is the assumption that Lincoln had in mind in the quotation used as the motto for the *Antioch Review*: "why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?" It is a bold assumption and one that very often is hard to swallow, but it is crucial. No other premise furnishes so powerful a lever for dislocating dogmatism and absolutes, no other premise—except the hypothetical method of modern science, the method of deliberate and organized tentativeness. It is not too much to say that scientific method is democratic method. It is not too much to say that a genuine neo-liberalism rests on both.

A third quality of the libeled liberal is also repudiated at the same time. He has been accused of a naive optimism based on trust in human reason and faith in inevitable progress. These have contributed, it is said, to the whole sorry pattern, making the liberal disillusioned and fatigued as well as frustrated and hamstrung. It would be very interesting to have made clear the contrary premises of the critics of liberalism. (Niebuhr is to be congratulated for uncovering so belligerently his "Sin" assumption.) Those premises would have to discount human intelligence, i.e.,

scientific inquiry and to follow Spengler and Sorokin in their philosophies of history. But the true liberal is not naively optimistic, nor does he believe in necessary progress. As to the latter he is neutral. Nature, for any philosophic naturalist, is neither good nor bad; it is what it is. It should not be praised or condemned—but exploited. The liberal would claim neither optimism nor pessimism as his ethics, but what William James called "meliorism." The natural world and the social world present a challenge. They can be improved—they have been. The working hypothesis here of liberalism (as of science) is no more than that the world presents the potentialities for direction. There is no naiveté in this. That the direction must inevitably be morally right or wrong—this would be a credulous and indictable optimism or pessimism.

As for the liberal's ostensible faith in human reason, it, too, is no more than the pragmatic recognition that man *does* solve problems through reflective thinking. Intelligent, scientific inquiry is an instrument that the human animal has evolved. It has not solved all problems, perhaps it never can. There is no blind reliance on the omnicompetence of a simple and absolute Reason, devoid of emotion, the register of a Rational Reality; that was the eighteenth century Age of Reason. Disillusion with that type of metaphysical rationalism has been profound. It cannot apply to an instrumentalist humanism that sees no acceptable alternative to free intelligence as the solver of human problems, an intelligence, moreover, that is not "intellectualistic" but the pattern of an entire human personality.

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This mention of the rôle of intelligence in human experience is perhaps the reason for a defense of liberalism. Because there is undoubtedly manifest these days a "failure of nerve." There is a distrust of critical thinking, of provisional hypotheses, of the specific—and perhaps piecemeal—handling of specific problems, of patience that is truly reflective and exploratory. The whole political spectrum reflects it. That failure is undoubtedly part of a larger movement, a movement that is the current expression of the tender-minded retreat. It has taken many forms, from neo-scholasticism to dialectic, all of them showing little stomach for the intellectual toughness that refuses to succumb to formulas.

Or, to approach the same problem from another direction, the least that can be expected of ethics and the social sciences is a sensitivity to the essence of the experimental attitude—the conviction that *method is more important than conclusion.* Was not this concentration upon technique the magic that transformed out of a supernatural theology and philosophy what we now know as physical science? It would be but prosy to repeat the well-known historical metamorphoses of astrology into astronomy, of alchemy into chemistry, of natural philosophy into mechanics and physics, all of which were given life by the touch of experimentalism. The point is to ask: Why can we not presume that such a changed attitude might not prove equally valuable in solving social problems? That is the thesis of liberalism.

To be sure, the acceptance of such a policy would remove from social thinking some of our most cherished playthings. It would be considered flaccid, i.e., typically "liberal." For it would tend to make inquiry in this field a matter of gathering prosaic facts and putting forward tentative and halting explanations, risking them to ridicule and collapse at every moment, accepting their collapse and trying other solutions—all of which would be considered by many thinkers as dreadfully dreary and grubby improvisation, quite different from the warm and pleasing irrelevance of after-dinner conversation. It would mean, however, a revolution in thought just as middle-class and unspectacular, but just as stupendous, as the revolution in industry of a century and a half ago.

There would be massive and revolutionary changes because the contents of politics, economics, and law could no longer be considered as a reflex of some allegedly intrinsic truth that allows no margin for time, place, or circumstance. Such "truth" could have little interest for scientific method since no way is provided to manipulate or to modify. The laws, subject matter, and problems of the social dimension become scientifically (experimentally) meaningful only when some free play is allowed for the transformation of those laws and problems. Now, this whole contention will be seriously misunderstood if it is mistakenly assumed that there is anything easy about that transformation. The difficulties of introducing genuinely intelligent and scientific attitudes into ethics and economics and politics—not to mention international affairs—are in all probability the most shattering man has to face. And some days, when the news is

particularly discouraging, one may feel that the difficulties are indeed insoluble and that nothing is left for the human animal but to return to its cave and start retracing the evolutionary path. This is the half-truth responsible for the tiredness of the liberal. . . .

But it is not the facility, it is the necessity of engineering a shift from absolutism to reflective inquiry that is being proposed here. Without that shift the field of human value and of the social enterprises must remain forever an alien: it cannot be accepted into that most characteristically human of efforts, the solving of problems through the procedure of deliberate reconstruction.

# RAW MATERIALS, KEY TO THE FUTURE

*By* WILL LISSNER

IN THE RAW MATERIALS PROBLEM that plagues the great imperialist powers today, and in the solutions for various aspects of the problem which are emerging from the debates and discussions of it within the United Nations, there is a key to the economic and political course of the world in the next generation.

With the rise of modern industrialism and the parallel growth of monopoly capitalism, the problem became one of first importance. As mechanical and later electrical energy replaced the animal power of man or beast, the productivity of labor was multiplied many fold. This process of harnessing the natural energies of coal, oil, gas and water power, it is estimated, gave the United States the equivalent of ten slaves in 1890 for each person in the population, and the equivalent of 169 slaves in 1943.

These gains in labor power are largely those of the machine age. In the technological age that is now dawning, even without anticipating the development of new energy forces such as atomic dissociation, even greater increases in laboring power may be expected, for the recent rise is at a rate never before equaled.

These energies are themselves raw materials for agriculture and industry. To harness them, metals and minerals were required. They made possible large-scale, and later, mass production, which created an enormous demand for an ever-increasing number of these and other raw materials. This demand has continually revolutionized the mining or cultivation, and the transportation of these materials, the administration and financing of their discovery and production, and latterly the technological process as a whole.

But no country, no world region, even, has a full complement of the raw materials needed by its industry. None is economically or geologically self-sufficient save for certain branches of light industry. Within the world economy, minerals must be interchanged because their sources are un-

equally distributed over the globe. The resource pattern of the world has a striking lesson that has retained its validity in spite of our recent epoch-making technological advance: modern industrialism has unified and integrated the populations of the globe and has made them as interdependent as the communities of a modern urban area.

In the early days of monopoly capitalism, as in the present era, the time of the system's maturity, the raw materials problem was and still is one primarily of distribution, that is, one of ownership, control, and exploitation. The resource pattern is a fact fixed by nature; minerals are where they are because of geological and biological contingencies that occurred aeons ago. More and more man is acquiring the power to adapt his natural environment to his needs, but he can never create a wholly new one. The pattern is constantly in flux, with its shape ever changing at the edges, but its density grows greater, never less.

Adolph Lowe and others have lately attacked this thesis. Intrigued by world-wide industrialization and the "second industrial revolution"—the technological revolution—they expect synthetic chemistry to do for regions where minerals are in scarce supply what electricity did for regions without local power supply, pointing out, of course, that chemical synthesis is in its infancy and its impact on the economy has yet to run its course. As Professor Lowe puts it:

"By substituting the ubiquitous and unlimited elements of the chemical world for the localized and scarce products of geological and biological evolution, the new technology seems to hold out, for every well-populated region, a situation of 'productive autarchy.' "

If there is any possibility of this, it should be apparent in the facts of the present situation. Social prophecies, however, even the more shocking ones, have a way of coming true even when they are based on facts that are not readily apparent. On this account, one should be quite ready to grant that the development Professor Lowe prophesies may possibly occur in the far-distant future. As far as the next decade or two are concerned, however, the thesis does not seem to apply.

To dispose of the analogy first, the development of hydropower has not equalized the energy potentials of the populous areas of the globe. The central grid system, a technological development, has equalized energy potentials of local regions within large countries, and of localities

within smaller countries. Localities possessing unique water resources are obliged to share them with less favored localities within the contiguous economic region by virtue of the need for an outlet for the vast volume of power that a big dam can produce. Small, single-purpose dams produce power only at high cost. Economy of production requires that a big dam power project serve other purposes as well, such as water conservation, erosion control, irrigation, navigation, and the development of other natural resources in the surrounding region.

Now the nature of the demand for power is erratic and fluctuating, influenced as it is by every caprice of the market, the weather, and other factors in the total environment. The composition of that demand is complex, ranging from electro-chemical industries that can use economically only dump power, to that most unpredictable of high-rate consumers, the householder. Occurring as they do in an industry that has probably the highest proportion of fixed capital to total capital, these cost factors make it profitable for individual power systems to assume very high sunk costs for the construction and maintenance of a central grid system. For by means of such a system power surpluses can be exported from one power system to another, and temporary power shortages made up by imports from one or another individual system on the circuit, rather than by rationing or by additional construction for emergencies. On this account, power can be shipped long distances over expensive transmission networks.

But these conditions do not mean that the economic law of increasing costs and diminishing returns is repealed. Even though the economic limits of profitable operation are widely extended, there still remain limits. The only important international export of hydropower today is found at the Canadian border and in central Europe, and there national boundaries do not coincide with those of economic regions. Less significant is its shipment in the form of such products as alumina exports from Latin America, and it remains to be seen whether this development will survive the war emergency.

Nowhere do we find a case, except possibly in England, in which a central grid system has equalized the energy potential of every locality within the region it serves and nowhere do we find it equalizing the potentials of two large, distinct economic regions. The profitable limits

for the extension of such a system exist not merely as radii from the power resources (the dam site, the port, or the railhead) but as determinants of the lines of the spider's web of high-tension transmission lines and stations.

But there is an even more fundamental consideration. The ancient Egyptians built irrigation ditches by the Nile and pyramids beyond it at a time when other races existed which also disappeared later, but without leaving a trace of their civilization. The Romans built aqueducts and roads when Germanic tribes were still nomads in the north of Europe. Big dams and central grid projects are so costly, and so slow in yielding returns at the beginning, that they can be undertaken only by the wealthier of the advanced industrial nations. And national wealth itself is a function of resource position. Economic regions lacking in well-distributed power resources find themselves caught in a vicious circle: they cannot produce the wealth which would make possible the costly construction that would permit them to make the optimum use of such resources as they have. Foreign capital investment, of course, has been the only device by which the circle has been broken. For this very reason some governments today are urging on the great powers that, as a part of postwar reconstruction, they set up an international W.P.A. to undertake these constructions in regions that could not do so on their own means.

The argument that the synthetic chemical industries may provide adequate substitutes for scarce raw materials has even less force. Certainly in developing substitutes we have done marvels. Some of the newer synthetic materials are not only better than their natural counterparts, but also cheaper to produce. Others cannot compete in quality, cost, or both and may amount only to emergency expedients.

It must be remembered, however, that while a few synthetics are created out of the air or the equally free waters of the sea (where cheap power and low-cost transportation are available), most of them are derivatives of lumber or other vegetable matter or of coal, oil, or other mineral matter. Technologically, Germany was in advance of the United States. But when the close of the war has lifted the curtain of military secrecy from the facts of raw materials production, it will be seen that in mineral substitution the United States has outstripped her Axis enemy. Not, one is inclined to think, because of any greater aptitude for technological ad-

vance, but because this country had an especially favorable resource position to begin with.

Precise data on the extent and permanent value of these substitutions are not available today, for of course this information has military value. But we are not dependent on the grandiose hints of industrial advertising men for a clue to the truth of the matter. Dr. C. K. Leith, one of the outstanding authorities on mineral resources and mineral production, is consultant on minerals to the War Production Board. As such he may be supposed to be privy to these military secrets; at the very least it is certain that he knows much about the facts. His opinion, stated recently, was:

> . . . Mineral specialists are pretty well convinced that the pattern of interdependence of nations for mineral supplies is now, in general, fixed for the future. *Substitution* has not materially changed the picture because, as shown by the record, new uses are found for nearly all of the minerals about as fast as their fields are invaded by substitution of other minerals.

Dr. Leith stresses that technological investigations are proving so vital in the present war because the knowledge of how to use the raw materials we have is fully as important as possession of the materials themselves. One thing, however, technology, the newer or the older, cannot do is develop knowledge of how to use to the highest range of practicality (the essence of technological substitution)—the raw materials one does not have.

In justice to Professor Lowe, to whom we owe many studies of the highest significance in world economics, it must be pointed out that he does not take the extreme position on this question which has been adopted by other students or which might be inferred from the brief quotation. He cites the trend toward synthetic production and its implications as one of a number of ambiguous trends in this field, and makes the necessary qualification for new technological processes requiring specific basic materials like mineral ores or oil. In crediting the newer technology's promise of regional autarchy, however, he is overlooking, it seems to me, the dynamic nature of the demand for minerals and the social nexus of human and natural resource costs which inhibits all mineral production, natural and synthetic.

The industrial interests of the leading imperialist powers, who are closer to the situation than any individual economist, show no disposition

at the present time to credit this promise. They, and agencies of the governments, are forwarding technological research. But at the same time, mineral-conscious as never before, they are scrambling in all parts of the world for control of mineral sources. Governments that speak for them have cited their needs for minerals as justification for going to war, and certainly the struggle between allied intra-national blocs of capitalist monopolists for control of mineral sources abroad was one of the contributory causes of the first world war, as it was of the second. As John A. Hobson and Rudolf Hilferding pointed out many years ago, the international struggle for raw materials sources aand supplies is one of the characteristics of the imperialist phase of monopoly capitalism and when it is not brought under social control, it inevitably leads to diplomatic tension and war.

An illustration of this is the recent controversy over the proposed Anglo-Arabian oil deal. This was not the first time that monopolistic interests in American oil came into conflict with monopolistic interests in British oil. A notable clash occurred after the first world war. Let R. T. Haslam, director of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, tell the story in his own words:

> Our government in 1922 urged American companies to secure rights to produce oil in the Near East. We attempted to acquire interests in Iraq. After six years of arduous negotiation, we entered into an agreement which limited to a certain percentage our share of the oil to be produced and restricted our producing activities throughout the whole area. In the United States such a contract would probably violate the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The point is that if America was to get any of the oil of Iraq, American companies had to abide by the conditions imposed by international competition.

Only last May Wendell Berge, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Anti-Trust Division of the Department of Justice, warned American producers against using the Webb-Pomerene Act as a cloak to make restrictive trade agreements with foreign cartels. The act was passed, he said, to help American businessmen to compete with foreign cartels, not to join them. But from the beginning American producers have looked upon the act as legalizing participation in foreign cartels and of their counterpart, monopolistic combinations at home. With other important divisions of the government fostering such action, the Anti-Trust Division has never got very far trying to estop it.

The necessities of wartime production have cartelized the whole business of producing and distributing raw materials. When Mr. Berge and his predecessor, Thurman Arnold, acting upon the revelations of Senator O'Mahoney's T.N.E.C., brought at long last a series of suits against the American cartelizers, the latter came into court with an array of government officials, many of them drawn from business, to prove that prosecution would hinder them from playing a full part in the war effort. They won the argument, of course.

But in his frank statement, the Standard Oil apologist begs the real point. Just who is "the government" that "urged" American interests in 1922 to involve themselves in the power politics of Middle East oil? Was it speaking in the interests of the American people as a whole, of petroleum consumers, or of certain oil interests themselves? Since this was the time of the Harding administration, when the influence of the oil monopolists extended right into the President's cabinet and produced the famous Teapot Dome oil scandal, it may be doubted if "the government" was acting either for the first or the second of these interests.

With this background, the build-up for the Anglo-Arabian deal naturally aroused suspicion. The public first was assailed with scare stories, emanating from government sources, that the demands of total war were depleting our oil reserves.

Oil is the commodity "as necessary as blood" in the battles of today and the rate of consumption has increased enormously. But this rate has significance only with relation to the rate and efficiency of production and refining, and the rate of discovery, projected into the future on the basis of geophysical inventories of strata likely to be oil-bearing. None of the data presented in these scare stories carried the slightest conviction. The petroleum reserves cited were "known" reserves, which often means reserves admitted by the oil companies to be held by them. It does not mean all existing reserves.

Or take the latest figures on the world's petroleum reserves given by the Petroleum Administration for War. This agency estimates the total reserves at nearly 51 billion barrels, crediting North American reserves with nearly 21 billion, the Middle East with 15½ billion, South America with nearly 7 billion and Russia nearly 6 billion. Yet Soviet Russia has in the Baku field probably the richest oil-bearing strata in the

world, and in the second Baku in the Urals and other fields, reserves the vastness of which can only be guessed at.

Indeed, Russia's possibilities as an oil-producing nation are being widened each year as her geologists and engineers explore the country's vast interior. And it is the opinion of informed petroleum engineeers that Russia's reserves in the fully explored areas alone exceed by a wide margin those of the Middle East. This producer, moreover, just before the war, was the world's second largest. How can these considerations be reconciled with the agency's estimate and its ranking? They cannot; and the administration is not to be blamed for that, since Russia, probably for good competitive reasons, has always been niggardly with her resource statistics.

As for the 51 billion barrel total, one recalls that just before the outbreak of the war, when the nonproducing nations were building up military stocks, the known reserves in storage pools and above the ground were estimated conservatively at more than 100 billion barrels, with many other billions, uncountable, in hiding.

This single instance should convince the serious inquirer that one has to be very wary of petroleum statistics. He would be a brash man who attempted to decide, without a whole array of data that he cannot possibly come by, whether the expert is right who says we have oil enough in North America for only five more years at the present rate of consumption, or whether the expert at the opposite pole, who holds we have ample for 100 years, more nearly states the case.

It may well be that we have a problem of dwindling reserves. It is a moot point whether technological progress in exploration, production, and refining is sufficient to overcome the unprecedented use of our resources in waging total war over the globe. One can only conclude on the basis of the facts in hand that the data, such as they are, are not conclusive.

After the dwindling reserve scare failed to impress Congress or public opinion, the military men were called in to testify that oil reserves close to home must be safeguarded for the next war, that European consumers dependent on these reserves must therefore be supplied from the Middle East, and that on that account the United States must build a pipe-

line from the Saudi Arabia field to a Mediterranean oil port at which United States tankers could load.

This argument may have sounded convincing to Standard Oil of California and the Texas Company, whose property interests in the Middle East field were involved, but it failed to convince our British allies. Indeed, Forrest Davis, in a series of articles in *The Saturday Evening Post* generally supposed to have been inspired from within the State Department, reports that Prime Minister Churchill, ever the defender of the empire, heckled President Roosevelt about it, demanding to know if we were trying again to cut in on Britain's oil preserve.

If this oil were destined for European consumers, it is difficult to understand why the British could not supply them as well as ourselves, particularly if we have to subsidize the transportation. If some other element of military necessity requires the project, one wonders why the government does not nationalize the whole business. American blood may have to be shed one day to defend this pipeline, and it will not be easy to counter the propaganda that our boys are being required to risk their lives to protect the investments and preserve the profits of Standard and Texaco.

What arrangement will emerge in final form to deal with the Anglo-Arabian situation remains to be seen. There is now prospect that Britain, Russia, and Canada may be willing to join the United States in a world-wide oil cartel, and if this matures the deal will take a minor place in the total picture.

Such a development as a world oil cartel controlled by four leading partners in the United Nations coalition would be in line with current trends in diplomacy. The United States and Canada, and Britain and Russia, have embarked on a new era of power politics in which each is seeking to realize the greatest economic and political advantages from the war while hoping somehow to reconcile its interests with those of the other members of the partnership. In the economic field especially, there is no rebirth of Wilsonian idealism.

The Atlantic Charter committed the United Nations, "with due respect for existing obligations," to give all nations "access on equal terms, to the trade and raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity." But lately Prime Minister Churchill has disclosed

to Commons that he himself inserted the qualification, to preserve the imperial preference system maintained by Empire Trade Agreements. Under such a condition there would be no reciprocity on Britain's part for the "equal access" that her partners would be bound to give her. Thus this idealistic assurance is not very likely to be translated into reality, unless Britain changes her mind.

But if there really is a genuine world problem of oil shortage, a world cartel to control the orderly production and marketing of this fuel resource would have definite advantages. It could space out the use of our limited oil pools and deposits until the process for making oil from coal or shale has been perfected on a comparative cost basis. It could assure that the oil which was distributed was used economically by the consuming nations, and not squandered. There would be disadvantages, of course. With the industry under private control in the United States, Britain and Canada, and under the control of the industry's managerial and party bureaucracy in Soviet Russia, public regulation of price policy could not be expected to provide adequate protection for the consumer. It would be better if the cartel's administration were a mixed one, composed of representatives of labor, management, petroleum consumers, the general public, and the military. It would be much more likely to be successful as a price regulator if some units of the industry were publicly owned and operated as yardstick plants. Moreover, technological development may be delayed.

Cartelization would be in line with the trend of current thinking on the handling of the problems of the primary producers after the war. The proposal of the American government that they be dealt with by removing trade barriers and by the extension of reciprocal trade treaties to promote international trade and facilitate the international flow of raw materials, has fallen on deaf ears.

The producing interests seem to be divided between two proposals, either of which would foster cartelization. One is that this flow be controlled by a group of nations which may be formed at the end of the war for the purpose not only of assuring equitable distribution for legitimate needs but of policing the world and keeping the peace. The other, which comes from the Combined Raw Materials Board through its American member, William L. Batt, and which was taken up enthusiastically by important sections of the minerals industries here and by the British

government abroad, was that the board continue to exercise its functions during the early peace years.

From this trend toward monopolization of various types and toward cartelization in the fuels and minerals industries, the producers of agricultural raw materials are by no means exempt. Already, though millions are improperly clad, the threat of a world surplus of cotton has appeared. The demand for wheat in the liberated countries will absorb the potential surplus in this foodstuff in the immediate period of reconstruction, but afterward a real one is certain to appear. The crop and price controls of the Agricultural Adjustment Act and later of the Soil Conservation Act are agriculture's counterpart of the industrial cartel; they are practices that aim, through restricting output, at conserving established positions and at maximizing the profits that accrue from them.

There is no need to deny Joseph A. Schumpeter's contention that cartelistic and monopolistic restraints within monopoly capitalism may be effective remedies in depression. Professor Schumpeter holds quite rightly that these devices may be used effectively to prevent obsolete units, branches, or industries from coming down with a crash, and to try to turn a rout, which might have catastrophic consequences, into an orderly retreat. Given monopoly capitalism, such restraints are inevitable. At the moment there is no prospect of reforming monopoly capitalism into a more rational system; but there is nothing inevitable about its survival. Indeed, unless its performance after the war is far superior to its record in the prewar period, it is inevitable that it will be scrapped.

The real trouble with cartelistic and monopolistic devices as means for handling the raw materials problem is that they, like the idea of equal access *for nations,* do not go to the root of the matter. The task is to assure the equal access of *all men* to the natural resources of the earth which none of them created but which all, in one form or another, require. The problem has changed in form considerably since the day that Henry George tackled it, but in essence it is the same old problem in this day of factory farms, deep mines, four-mile wells, and giant dams as it was when our chief resource was acreage for homesteading. It is the problem we face in all areas of the economy when we seek to democratize it, that of assuring equality of economic opportunity to all citizens.

The real problem goes to the seat of the power of industrial monopoly. John D. Rockefeller, Sr. gave testimony of this. When he sold the Mesabi range, which he had obtained for $420,000, at $79,000,000 profit to United States Steel, he exclaimed: "I was astonished that the steel makers had not seen the necessity of controlling their ore supplies."

Back in the days when considerable risk attended the clearing and cultivation of virgin land, discovering and exploiting mineral ores and exploring and drilling for oil-bearing strata, there may have been justification for offering as a production bonus the right to appropriate privately the economic rent of land and natural resources created by geological and social forces, as well as the right to exact all the speculative profits the traffic would bear. It could be contended with equal force, I think, however, that a more rational type of development along the lines of Henry George's ideas—i.e., high taxes on land values—would have yielded at least as much production at a much smaller social cost. But there is no need to debate what might have been. In this day when experimental cultivation, discovery, and exploration are carried on very largely by government agencies, financed out of public funds obtained from the general taxpayers, and when these agencies could easily assume the whole job, there is no need whatever to pay these exorbitant premiums to private exploiters.

The urban-land-value-tax technique, of course, is not adequate for socializing agricultural land and natural resource sites and stores. The urban land value tax, naturally, is a more complex device in practice than it appears in the economically naive expositions of some single taxers. As Danish experience has shown, the very first step in the process requires the introduction of a democratic method of public assessment within the neighboring community, supervised by experts. To achieve its full social effects, zoning and other techniques of land use planning must be assimilated into the process. Similarly, agricultural economists who favor the social appropriation of the rent of land and natural resources have demonstrated that, for rural tracts, the rate of a site value tax would have to be varied annually to allow for change in the physical productivity of the farm.

To meet the mineral situation, resource economists who advocate the socialization of rent see the need for a combination of tax devices

based on a rent tax and a severance tax to effect social control over deposit exploitation. Moreover, it is quite clear that such a combination could not be set down in single form for the mineral industries as a whole, but would have to be adapted to the special situations of groups of them. The forest economists are developing a combination of forest taxes based on the principle of rent and severance, designed to effect planned use of forest resources to achieve optimum long-period return. Proposals for reform of the antiquated patent monopoly system give promise of eventual social control over the development of our all-important technological resources.

In the hydropower resources, wherever federal ownership and operation on an economic basis is not feasible, operation by private public-utility monopolies under public regulation of price and production policies still seems the best course, although it must be admitted that we have lagged in developing adequate procedures for that regulation. A similar lag may be charged against the specialists in public finance, who have made little attempt to study the problem of the allocation of revenues. Why the tax receipts from an oil deposit in Dutch Guiana should wholly benefit the natives of that colonial country who do nothing to create the demand for the oil; or, as is more probable, why it should be employed for their exclusive benefit by the white colonials engaged in exploiting the natives as well as the deposit, is hard to understand. Particularly if one believes that the community, which by its presence and activities creates the rent of resource and other lands, should enjoy the public services or the escape from existing tax burdens which the social appropriation of that rent would make possible, whether the community be one of families within an urban or rural region or one of advanced industrial nations.

That the form of land socialization would be more complex as the theory was translated into reality Henry George foresaw, although few of his followers today credit him with that foresight. To the chagrin and conspiring silence of the ultra-individualistic of his followers, he also foresaw that the organization of production based on the individual entrepreneur was nothing eternal but was bound to be changed with the rationalizing of production as well as of shares in the product. In emphasizing this, the late Franz Oppenheimer, the elaborator and critic of George's ideas, like the many others who have refined George's theory, was following faithfully in the tradition George initiated.

## RAW MATERIALS, KEY TO THE FUTURE

In 1909 President Theodore Roosevelt made overtures with a view to international cooperative control of the world's raw material resources. As William F. Notz has pointed out, they, and the similar overtures of the League of Nations, have been nullified by national self-interest and imperialist rivalry. The need for adequate rational control is more important today, when modern technology has multiplied the horror and destructiveness of war, than ever. Professor Notz's warning, first made in the early '30's, cannot be repeated too often: "The problem must inevitably be met; it is intimately bound up with the future of the world." With national self-interest more intense and imperialistic rivalry unbridled, we either win the fight for rational control or we lose the future.

# *WE NOTE . . .*

## *BERNARD DEVOTO'S FALLACY*

The argument which broke out recently upon the publication of Bernard DeVoto's *The Literary Fallacy* seems likely to obscure the book's message rather than to popularize it. This is unfortunate, for the main thesis is a challenging one. But unlike Miss Lillian Smith, who not long ago publicly protested the buying and reading of her novel *Strange Fruit* for the wrong reasons (it was banned in Boston allegedly for obscenity), Mr. DeVoto seems to have deliberately planned and encouraged his own controversy and his own misunderstanding. That can be the only explanation of why he protested *beforehand*. In the first pages of *The Literary Fallacy* he says that he knows he is going to be misunderstood—surely a strange statement from one who has always had great success in making himself clear!

The introduction is of a piece with some other elements in the book. Throughout, DeVoto's role is that of a bad boy. The clue to Sinclair Lewis' novels, he says, is that the characters are sophomoric; likewise, Ernest Hemingway's are all Cro-Magnon. Van Wyck Brooks, whom he examines at length in both earlier and later phases, is obviously someone he wouldn't like "even if he were good."

There was some excuse, then, when Sinclair Lewis counterattacked in the pages of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, although the manner of the offensive could hardly be described as befitting a Nobel Prize winner. DeVoto frequently makes use of Freudian terminology. Perhaps it is time that he was himself "psyched" for the public's information. His belligerence and animus, where certain writers are concerned, are surely not of aesthetic origin.

Yet his theme is worth examining. It is that the major writers of the 1920's—Brooks, Lewis, Hemingway, T. S. Eliot, H. L. Mencken, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, John Dos Passos—misrepresented America. This would not have been so unfortunate, says DeVoto, had it not come to pass that they and all those who appreciated their works believed that they *did* represent America. As writers they chose a "line" or a formula (chiefly furnished by Brooks) and then wrote to it. That line or formula became a "literary fallacy"; it subordinated life to literature and to literary ideas. Specifically, in the 1920's, it tended to heap scorn upon America and upon democracy. But the truth is, says DeVoto, that America at that time was very much a going concern. (For contrast he cites a group of secondary writers who held the democratic faith, who kept close to the people, and who wrote out of experience instead of from plain theory—Carl Sandburg, Willa Cather, James Farrell, Stephen Vincent Benet, Robert Frost.)

What is the truth? Parenthetically, it should be said that a good deal of water has passed under the bridge since the 1920's. Today one would hardly like to bracket Eliot and Mencken with Dos Passos and Brooks. Whatever their

superficial likenesses in the '20's they are not the same now, and their works of the '30's and '40's prove it. But let us waive this as a minor objection.

As to the main charge, it must be admitted that there is something to it. The fact is Bernard DeVoto did not invent the idea that Van Wyck Brooks and company went non-American and nondemocratic in the '20's. It has been admitted and elaborated by Brooks himself and has received attention from others, notably Archibald MacLeish.

But how did the phenomenon arise? DeVoto blames all upon the literary fallacy—theory riding roughshod over the facts of daily experience. It seems more likely that something nondemocratic *did* happen to the America of the '20's and that the leading writers of the time *did* represent, not always successfully perhaps, what was then going on. The nub of the question clearly lies in what you think happened in the days of Harding and Coolidge. Far more people than writers got off the track then, and to say that Sandburg and Frost tapped a deeper traditional stream in America is not to say that Wolfe and Dos Passos and Lewis were unrepresentative. There are many Americas and few of them have been unconfused.

Mr. DeVoto's question is only secondarily literary. But he does not answer it although he prides himself upon his nonliterary knowledge. He does not answer it because he refuses to look at the 1920's for what they were. A thoroughly satisfactory book about the writers of the time has not yet been written. When it is, it will be done by someone who not only understands the decade's literature but will also have in hand its economics, politics, and sociology. P.B.

## *ECONOMICS AND THE TECHNOLOGICAL CONTINUUM*

A sound and adequate theory is the desideratum of the present-day progressive movement. People who have been defending the rights of trade unions, favoring greater social security, advocating a sufficiency of purchasing power to assure full employment need to have assurance that they are on grounds more fundamental than a vague kind of humanitarianism. Indeed, some defections from the cause of the progressive movement, as typified by John T. Flynn and Senator Wheeler, are probably due to a lack of an adequately grounded theoretical foundation.

In the past Marxism has furnished the most substantial basis upon which revolutionaries and reformers alike erected their superstructure of social change. But even Marxism has proved an insubstantial base upon which liberalism could firmly stand. It is not necessary to look at the fluctuating line of the Communist Party alone to prove the validity of this assertion. The Marxist training of John Chamberlain and James Burnham, to take two outstanding examples of apostates from the progressive movement, did not prevent them from becoming the oracles of a price-controlled capitalism in one case and a managerially-directed capitalism in the other.

It is one of the outstanding merits of a recently published book by C. E. Ayres, *The Theory of Economic Prog-*

*ress*[1] that theoretical sense is made of "the blooming, buzzing confusion" of modern industrialism. Ayres's book, two chapters of which appeared in the spring and summer (1943) issues of *The Antioch Review,* derives its ideational framework from the instrumental logic of John Dewey and the Veblenian dichotomy of institutions and technology. Indeed, Ayres modestly disclaims any originality in the development of the ideas he presents in his *Theory.*

Whether the book is original or not its application to the intellectual crisis of our time must be clearly apparent. Two criticisms can be anticipated: (1) it is too optimistic, and (2) the technological theory of value does not allow for a theory of distribution.

The objection of overoptimism will be easily hurdled by any one who clearly understands the Veblenian distinction between institutions and technology. Ayres takes this distinction from the pigeonhole of the economists' filing cabinet and places it at the very center of the economic problem. The present crisis, when it is reduced to its barest essentials, is a problem of social or institutional adjustment to modern technology. Either we adjust or we do not adjust! If we do not adjust, mankind will fall to a lower cultural and economic level. Perhaps Ayres can be accused of substituting faith for reason when he expresses his belief in man's ultimate adjustment to technology. However, his proof of the technological continuum as given in Chapters Six and Seven puts his assertion of adjustment upon a pretty substantial foundation. But this ultimate triumph of technological values and the discarding of irrelevant institutions will not take place automatically. This is clearly evident in the last chapter, "The Power of Ideas," an eloquent plea for the contribution of thinking men to technology and its utilization.

Ayres has not given us a theory of distribution in his technological theory of value. It should be observed, however, that existing theories of distribution are institutional and derived from an existing ceremonial pattern. Prevailing institutions determine the distribution of the product of modern technology, but there is no assurance that the orthodox theory is compatible with the most efficient use of our means of production. Indeed, the existing scheme of distribution which allocates a considerable proportion of the total national income to owners of property in the form of interest is undoubtedly antithetical to the best use of our productive capacity. Anyone familiar with Keynes will recognize the merit of the contention that the rate of interest under capitalism is too high to promote the fullest use of industrial capacity.

As a heretical base to the Keynesian economics, *The Theory of Economic Progress* may find its greatest immediate usefulness. Keynes has had a phenomenal success in making present-day economists conscious of the need of adequate purchasing power as a *sine qua non* of an expanding national income. Many economists cannot reconcile Keynes to the orthodox theory of price equilibrium, as well as to its Marxian variant. To such economists Ayres's book must be a welcome boon.

V.C.

[1]University of North Carolina Press, 1944. $3.

## *ANTILABOR OFFENSIVE*

Reactionary elements in monopoly capitalism have recognized that within the military war there is a social war, a struggle for social power. They have, whenever the situation seemed favorable, used the war to set going one offensive after another against the labor unions. It is not difficult to find items in proof.

*Item*: Labor has been largely eased out of the picture in Washington. Where at the beginning of the war emergency Sidney Hillman shared power with William Knudsen, the War Production Board has since become, in the words of one commentator, "A House of Delegates" of monopoly big business.

*Item*: The campaign against overtime pay was a campaign to undermine the unions, for the profits of the big producers increase with overtime work. The animus was evident in Eddie Rickenbacker, who was in favor of abolishing overtime but *not* in favor of limiting salaries to $25,000 a year, as proposed by President Roosevelt, for salary limitation would "destroy initiative." The animus was still clearer in Rickenbacker's peculiar new form of "red scare"—he warned that, while Russia was going "capitalist," the United States was in danger of going "communist"!

*Item*: The strike situation was distorted to undermine labor unions. True, there have been unjustifiable strikes and they have hurt labor. But on the whole organized labor has kept its "no strike" pledge and the holdups in production were never serious. Yet a deliberate campaign has been going on to make the soldiers believe that American union workers were disloyal and did practically nothing else but strike.

*Item*: The Smith-Connally Act, passed by Congress in the summer of 1942, used the strikes as an excuse to hit at unions. Indeed, the act incited strikes and made it more difficult for responsible union officials to control them, since the act indirectly legalized strikes through the 30-day and the voting provisions. Moreover, the insertion of the clause prohibiting labor unions from making political contributions had no connection with the war or with strikes, and has been used in an effort (unsuccessfully) to cripple the Political Action Committee.

*Item*: In at least seven states the legislatures have enacted anti-union legislation, and similar legislation has been proposed in a score of other states. Legislation enacted places unions under state supervision; compels unions to incorporate; prohibits strikes, secondary boycotts, and picketing under certain conditions; forces union agents to take out licenses or register (Texas is among these states—R. J. Thomas defied the law, was arrested, and is pressing to bring the case before the United States Supreme Court, but Texas has not been hasty to comply); bans political contributions. A report by the Division of Labor Standards of the federal Department of Labor, declares that "state legislation prohibits strikes and picketing under circumstances usually recognized as proper exercise of constitutional rights." The bills are similar in their language, which indicates a common organized origin. What is significant about the state legislation re restrictions, according to the Civil Liberties Union, "is not their relation to the war but

their reflection of hostile forces using the war as an occasion to cripple or destroy the unions permanently."

The newest phase of the antilabor offensive flared up in the Montgomery Ward defiance of union labor, the War Labor Board, the N.L.R.B., and the government. Other aspects of this offensive led Walter Reuther, vice-president of the United Automobile Workers, C.I.O., to propose on June 8 *a Congressional investigation to determine whether industry was using the war effort to undermine labor unions.*

This is the background: As a compromise between union demands for a closed shop and employer demands for an open shop the War Labor Board adopted the "maintenance of membership" policy. Under this policy new workers may or may not join the union; even after they join they may resign within fifteen days; after that, however, they must maintain their membership for the duration of a contract, or one year. Union, employer, and public representatives on the W.L.B. went along with this compromise. Then came a change in the employers. Apparently, the change was incited by a joint committee set up by the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce to "instruct" the employer members of the W.L.B. how to vote; and this committee assigned as "executive assistant" to the employer members a man whose antilabor record was revealed by the Senate LaFollette committee on civil liberties. In one case a corporation was "advised" to refuse maintenance of membership and go to the courts. Then came the Montgomery Ward defiance.

Montgomery Ward refused to follow a W.L.B. directive and renew an agreement with the union on the ground that it no longer represented the workers. It also refused maintenance of membership. On April 12 Local 20 (Chicago) of the United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees Union, C.I.O., called a strike. The President ordered seizure of the Montgomery Ward plant. A new N.L.R.B. election was held and the union won. The War Labor Board ordered extension of the terms of the old contract until a new contract could be negotiated. Montgomery Ward, through its Chairman, Sewell Avery, was openly defiant. The company filed five court suits against the W.L.B. On June 2 the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, in a unanimous decision, declared no statute authorizes court review of W.L.B. orders. On June 8 Sewell Avery told a House committee the government, W.L.B., and N.L.R.B. were in a conspiracy to force a "closed shop" on industry. Of the situation the *Louisville Courier-Journal,* in an editorial, said:

> It is not hard to picture a state of consternation in certain quarters as a result of the United States Court of Appeals ruling that War Labor Board orders are not subject to review by courts. Where, for example, does this leave Mr. Sewell Avery and the technique of interminable litigation which he had developed to put W.L.B. and labor in their places? . . . It is easy, also, to see a kind of poetic justice in the situation. For the Board, we recall, acquired its legal sanction from the War Labor Disputes (Smith-Connally) act—and the name popularly ascribed to this act was "anti-strike" act. . . . Into it went a bit of everything that Congress in a vengeful mood could conjure up—restriction of the right to picket, prohibition of campaign contributions by labor organizations, ban

on sympathetic strikes and on boycotts, provisions for federal registration and financial accounting by unions. In the shifting some of these items were taken out, but enough remained to give some virtue to the cry of labor organizations that it was distinctly a law to hound them.

There have been unnecessary, unjustifiable strikes during the war. But the Montgomery Ward strike was clearly a necessary strike, an answer to provocative corporation defiance of the union and the law. Organized labor was unanimous in support of the strike, except for Communists and their sympathizers. The Communist *Daily Worker* condemned the strike; on May 20 it attacked the newspaper *PM* for an "editorial trying to justify 'certain' strikes. The Montgomery Ward strike which *PM* admits Sewell Avery had tried to provoke for years, is given as one example. But *PM* does not explain what advantage it sees for the workers if they oblige Avery. Actually *PM*'s position . . . which the Trotskyites and Lewisites will welcome . . . is the first step toward nullifying the no-strike agreement." One of the locals (St. Paul) of Harry Bridges' Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union refused a plea of the Montgomery Ward workers not to handle struck goods, while another local adopted a resolution saying "strikes are treason." Bridges himself called for an extension of the no-strike pledge into the postwar period, and was denounced by labor leaders, including R. J. Thomas, president of the United Automobile Workers, C.I.O.

Labor's no-strike pledge, which on the whole has been observed, is no unconditional capitulation. It is a two-way street which calls for the employers' cooperation and their refusal to use the war emergency to undermine the unions. The antilabor offensive will go on, and it will flare up in the postwar period. Union labor cannot tie its hands in advance, for monopoly capitalism will continue to wage war against labor in its struggle for power. L.C.

# *THE READER WRITES*

## *Mr. Bentley and the Classicists*

To the Editor:

I greatly enjoyed Mr. Bentley's "Romanticism: a Re-evaluation" but there are people like Yvor Winters who will be amused to see me put down as a Classicist. . . .

Truly I confess to a little touch of snobbishness. I am duly impressed by scholars and gentlemen, and I should be proud to be admitted into the goodly company of Classicists, of which my own son is an ornament. But I am afraid that their "well bred voices," vociferous for once, would chase me away. For I am hopelessly tainted with Romanticism, Democracy, Relativism and sundry other heresies.

Yet Messrs. Barzun and Bentley can not be accused of misquoting or misunderstanding me. What I have said I have said, and I trust I have said it plainly. *Romanticism* is a word with seven different meanings and seventy times seven con-

notations. In this it ranks with *Religion, Nature, Reason, Democracy, Liberty* and *Love*. When using the term, I should have added a classification number: *Romanticism B 17*. As a rule, the context will take care of the difficulty.

One may enjoy a golden afternoon at Sidi Bou Said without being a Mohammedan; or (longingly, romantically) a chat with Fontenelle under "the cool and distant stars" without being a Classicist. One may trace the connection between Herder, Hugo's *Les Burgraves,* and Hitler's *Third Reich* without being a declared enemy of Romanticism.

I too tried my hand at clearing up that confused problem. In *Art for Art's Sake,* I discuss the five-fold attitude of the Romanticists to the political and social problems of their time, from sheer reaction to Promethean democracy. In *Preface to World Literature,* I attempt to distinguish between temperaments, schools, periods, and permanent tendencies. In my mind, Romanticism and Classicism are inseparable, the two poles of a single axis. Guillermo de Torre expressed the same thought in *La Aventura y el Orden*. Undiluted "adventure" is chaos; unmitigated "order" is death. As I grow older, I am pardonably more eager for "adventure" (in the spirit, *bien entendu!*) than I was in my severely disciplined youth. At any rate, I have constantly attacked the two shibboleths of the classical-minded: *standards* and *values*. The notion of *standards* belongs to the industrial world; the notion of *value* to the commercial. My son accuses me of cherishing instead the most romantic of all words: *Beyond*.

Stanford University, California. ALBERT GUÉRARD

## *In This Issue "Dear Sam"*

To the Editors:

Congratulations on your Spring issue! Bentley is tops. The C.E.D. article did a good job on something everyone should know about, and Mr. Kingsley in "Serious Blunder on the Right" gave the positive answer to the C.E.D. criticism. Few articles have been more packed with information about a little known subject than Mr. Grattan's "The Australian Labor Movement," and so on and so on.

In fact nearly every one of your articles that I have read is a standout by itself. But this leads me to a criticism. Altogether the *Review* is pretty solid going. It isn't the kind of thing you can read through at either one or two sittings. The trouble is you read one or two articles, lay down the magazine, later on read one or two more, and in the end, somebody picks it up or mislays it, and you never do get a crack at the final three or four articles. How about running more humorous stuff like Mr. Geiger's and Mr. Schnurer's political dictionary or a story once in a while? There must be more of that kind of thing available than you print, and believe me, we readers would appreciate the more solid stuff if we had a breather now and then.

Orlando, Florida. CHARLES BLUESTONE

# *CONTRIBUTORS*

An article on political unity between labor and the farmers is particularly timely coming on the heels of the recent success of the C.C.F. in the Saskatchewan elections. DAVID LEWIS is National Secretary of the C.C.F. and co-author with National Chairman Frank Scott of *Make This YOUR Canada.* His "Socialism Over the Border: Canada's C.C.F." appeared in our Winter (1943) issue.

MURRAY D. LINCOLN is probably best known for his work as Executive Secretary of the highly successful Ohio Farm Bureau. He has had other extensive business experience, is at present President of The Cooperative League of the U. S. A. and a trustee of Antioch College. He served as lay representative for American agriculture on the United States Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture at Hot Springs, Virginia in May, 1943.

None should know better the power of the farm bloc and its allies over American agriculture than RUSSELL SMITH, Legislative Secretary of the National Farmers Union. Mr. Smith was a newspaperman for many years, then served the Department of Agriculture (1938-43), for the greater part of the time as Director of Economic Information.

P. ALSTON WARING and WALTER MAGNUS TELLER are farmers in southeastern Pennsylvania. No more intelligent or more vigorous book on the farm problem has been written recently than their *Roots in the Earth* (Harper, 1943).

BEATRICE GOMBERG, who here examines British food control, has served on the staff of the Social Security Board and worked on the monumental study of the National Resources Planning Board, *Long-Range Work, Relief, and Security Policies.* She did research on the British war economy for the Committee on Social Security of the Social Science Research Council.

MARION CLAWSON has been on the staff of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics for fifteen years. Most recently he has been conducting research studies to guide the agricultural development of the Great Columbia Basin and Central Valley Federal Reclamation Projects.

FREEMAN CHAMPNEY, who writes of literature taking to the woods, is an editor of the *Review* and the manager of the Antioch Press. His "Albert Halper's Little People" appeared in the Winter (1942) issue.

LEWIS COREY's article on farm economics is the second in a group which will include postwar problems. Besides being an editor of the *Review*, Mr. Corey is lecturer in economics at Antioch College.

IRWIN STARK is a young New York poet and short story writer. His work has appeared in a number of anthologies and in such magazines as *Twice-a-Year*, *The Christian Century*, and *Coronet*.

We shall say that JOHN DEWEY is JOHN DEWEY and that whoever does not know of him does not deserve to be enlightened since his books are in every library and his educational principles at work in every school. The present article was read at the recent Second Annual Conference on the Scientific Spirit and Democratic Faith, was also presented at Ohio State University at a conference honoring Professor Boyd H. Bode.

"Liberals Don't Have To Be Tired" is part of a book on social philosophy which GEORGE GEIGER is now engaged in writing. Mr. Geiger is an editor of the *Review* and head of the Department of Philosophy of Antioch College.

WILL LISSNER is editor of *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* and has for a number of years been a member of the staff of the *New York Times*. He is particularly interested in the field of land economics, contributing both in writing and in translating the work of European authorities.